DELPHIAN TEXT

PART FIFTEEN

DELPHIAN TEXT

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PART FIFTEEN

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THE BUILDING OF OUR SOCIAL STRUCTURE

by

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GREAT PERIODS OF PAINTING

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INTRODUCTORY

IT was to be expected that the influence of Græco-Roman culture would prove more lasting in Italy than in regions north of the Alps. In the southern peninsula, monuments were to be seen on every hand which bespoke the glory of Rome, the power of whose name was never wholly forgotten, even in the darkest days of barbarian invasion. A feeling of kinship between citizens of Renaissance Italy and ancient Rome made the classical revival of the fifteenth century much more powerful in the south than in Germanic countries. This must be taken into account as we turn to the painting of other European lands.

In warm climates, the human figure, less hampered with garments, is familiar to the artist. The Greeks found its lines graceful and never wearied of reproducing them in color and in stone. Much the same may be said of artists of the Italian Renaissance.

Farther north, unwieldy apparel conceals the natural lines of the body, frequently disguising it completely. The primitives of Flanders and Germany repeatedly painted the human figure but rarely did they show it to be beautiful. As a result, love of the artistic directed their attention to nature and, as time went on, natural scenery, whether on sea or land, lured the painter away from the exclusive portrayal of people.

Painting developed rapidly in Germany and Flanders in the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, during which time it was backward in France and Spain. A wave of religious mysticism swept over the Rhinelands in the twelfth century, seriously affecting the early school of Cologne, which was wholly devotional. Little remains of the Cologne painters today. Among them Meister Wilhelm was accounted greatest. In the progress of painting, perhaps the most important result of this school was to influence the early art of the Low Countries. However, we shall return to the Cologne painters again, in connection with German art.

The Flemish people, who produced painters of genius at a time when painting was otherwise important in Italy alone, were thrifty, practical folk, absorbed with life as they found it rather than with theories or abstractions. It was natural that as quickly as they shook themselves free from foreign influence they would depict what they saw rather than what they felt.

The Gothic movement, never important in Italy, dominated Teutonic states. It gave rise to the numerous Gothic churches, still to be seen in Europe. The limited wall surfaces of these churches, unlike those of Italy, precluded the extensive frescoes which decorated the walls of southern churches. As a consequence, the skill of the northern painter was directed to panels and altarpieces, done in tempera, and more especially, to the delicate miniatures of hand illuminated manuscripts.

One effective way of illustrating scriptural story was by means of stained glass windows. This art was practiced more in France during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries than elsewhere. Here again, the genius of the artist found an outlet.

The Flemish cities, such as Ghent, Antwerp, Brussels and Ypres, became wealthy through medieval trade. It was natural that their citizens should wish to give expression to civic pride by the erection of splendid churches and guild halls. The art of painting, first devoted solely to the uses of religion, gradually broadened to serve the increasing needs of secular life.

Apart from Italy, whose splendid expression in painting has already been considered, the only great European painters of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries arose in the Low Countries, known today as Belgium and The Netherlands. To the painting of Flanders we shall now give attention.

I. FLEMISH PAINTING

FLANDERS of the Middle Ages included rather more territory than present Belgium. It had a momentous history which reaches back to the empire of Charlemagne, and, before that, to the Gallic wars of Cæsar, who wrote of the Belgæ. It is impossible for us at this point to enter in detail upon its political vicissitudes; suffice it to note that from 1364 until 1477 it was united to Burgundy and ruled by Burgundian dukes. Generally speaking, they were patrons of art and interested particularly in the art of illumination. Early Flemish painting never shook itself free from the influence of the miniaturist, who gave little thought to unity of design and expended infinite pains upon fine work and small detail.

When Burgundy was reunited to France, in 1477, Flanders passed from the wise rule of the Burgundian dukes to that of the House of Hapsburg. Soon its trade became hampered and its prosperity declined. In course of time Flanders, like The Netherlands, became involved in a disastrous war for independence and although it was ultimately freed from the oppressive rule of the Spanish Hapsburgs, its commerce and fine arts suffered tremendously by the political upheaval.

Were we concerned with the origins of Flemish painting it would be necessary for us to turn back to the age of Charlemagne, who brought Byzantine artists to western Europe to decorate his palaces. Their work perished but its influence was reflected in miniatures, set in books of devotion, illuminated by talented artists. It became the custom to decorate the margins of psalters, Gospels and stories of the saints by scenes of the months, wherein the tasks of peasants were represented according to the season. For example, March was the month for sowing the seed, September for harvesting. During the winter months, the farmer tended to his flocks and prepared for coming spring; in summer he cultivated his crops. In such ways as these, the ingenuity of the miniature painter expended itself. Flemish

illumination reached a high degree of perfection and some of the most remarkable copies of the Book of Hours were done by Flemish artists, Hubert van Eyck and Memling among them.

Painting also found an outlet in the making of elaborate altarpieces which came more and more into demand. The major portion of these has disappeared, for the Protestant Reformation worked havoc with the production of the Flemish primitives. Nevertheless, a considerable number of these wooden panels are still preserved in chapels and museums.

1. The Van Eyck Family

Flemish painting really begins with the work of the brothers Van Eyck, whose period of activity fell in the first part of the fifteenth century. Few facts are known regarding Hubert and Jan; something is recorded of a brother, Lambert, likewise a painter; while tradition says that a sister, Margaret, possessed no mean artistic ability.

Hubert van Eyck is supposed to have been born about 1366; he died in 1426. He was far more gifted than his brother Jan, although Jan was an able portraitist. Hubert is best known by his remarkable altarpiece, *The Adoration of the Lamb,* one of the greatest paintings ever executed. One who stands before this painting must of necessity experience perplexity, for the initial steps by which Flemish art developed to such perfection as is here exhibited are lacking to us today. Only a study of miniatures, inaccessible to the general student, sheds light upon the earlier stages of Flemish painting.

Hubert died before his huge altarpiece was completed; his brother, Jan, finished it in 1432, in which year it was set into place. It consisted originally of nineteen panels. During the Napoleonic wars, it was sent with other plunder into France. When finally restored to Ghent, some portions of it were lacking. Five panels are today in Germany, others in Brussels, although copies have been made of these, to leave the altarpiece intact.

Jan van Eyck was considerably younger than his brother, who was also his teacher. The date of his birth is given variously, as 1380 and 1390. He died in 1441. In 1425 he entered the services of the Duke of Burgundy as court painter; he was sent on various journeys to paint portraits of the ladies with whom the Duke contemplated marriage. Such an errand took Jan van Eyck to Portugal, where he remained the better part of two years. The Flemish representative of the Medicean banking system was afterwards painted by him and numerous prominent men desired him to give them immortality on canvas.

Charles Reade made use of such data as are known regarding this talented family for his historical romance, *The*

Cloister and the Hearth, which is interesting for its fifteenth century atmosphere.

Of surviving paintings by Hubert and Jan van Eyck, foremost is *The Adoration of the Lamb.*

a. *Adoration of the Lamb*

The subject of the altarpiece is set forth in the Book of Revelation, wherein is described the vision of the apostle. The use of the lamb as a symbol for Christ was common in early centuries of Christianity, its innocence and purity and its helplessness as a sacrifice on the altar being emphasized. It is well to read the entire vision as recorded in the last book of the New Testament. A few outstanding sentences explain the *"Adoration"*:

"And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, These that are arrayed in the white robes, who are they and whence come they? And I said unto him, My lord, thou knowest. And he said unto me, These are they that come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God; and they serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall be their shepherd and shall guide them upon the fountains of waters of life: and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes. . . .

"And I saw and beheld the Lamb standing on Mount Zion and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his name and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and the voice which I heard was as the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sang as it were a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders and no man could learn the song save the hundred and forty and four thousand, even they that had been saved from out the earth."[a]

Hubert van Eyck was commissioned by the Burgomeister of Ghent to make an altarpiece for a memorial chapel which that wealthy merchant constructed in the church of St. Bavons. The merchant's portrait and that of his wife were painted on the outside of the wings; for this altarpiece, like many another, was constructed so that it might be folded up, to preserve the inside panels from possible injury.

The altarpiece consists of an upper and lower portion. Seven panels make up the upper row, a figure representing God enthroned being in the center. On his right is the Mother Mary; on the left, John the Baptist. To the right of Mary is a group of singing angels; on the left of St. John, angels playing musical instruments. The figures of Adam and Eve flank the upper row, these being, in all probability, the work of Jan van Eyck.

The central panel of the lower row contains the *Adoration of the Lamb,* which is as wide as all three central panels in the upper row. As we face the painting, the two panels at the left of the Adoration are filled with "Just Judges" and knights in the service of Christianity; on the right, hermits and pilgrims fill two corresponding panels. When the wings are closed, a picture of the Annunciation is visible; also portraits of the donors, with figures of angels.

It is often claimed that the brothers van Eyck discovered how to blend colors with oil, a new process that revolutionized painting. As a matter of fact, various experiments had been made with oil before their time but they were the first to perfect the process. It is surmised that they also invented a clear varnish to preserve their paintings. The colors in their pictures astonish one by the brightness of their hues. These new methods of blending colors were carried to Italy and made possible the fine melting tones which we find in the work of Giorgione and Titian.

It is impossible today to say exactly what part of the large altarpiece was done by Jan. Hubert designed the picture and the finer work is believed to be his, while the inartistic, realistic figures of Adam and Eve are attributed to Jan, who never concerned himself with beauty.

There is still in Madrid an altarpiece which is said to be the work of Jan, done during his sojourn in Spain. It is

known as *The Fountain of Salvation.* His portraits are familiar, especially his *Man with the Pink* and his portrait of Arnolfini and his wife.

"Both Hubert and Jan van Eyck were court artists, and Jan at any rate, lived in the atmosphere of courts during all the years of his independent activity. If he painted for others than his prince and leading courtiers, it was only for the richest merchants, such as the Arnolfini, or for prominent churchmen. There was no force operative upon him at any time to make him a popular painter appealing to the multitude. Thus, his art is aristocratic. His portraits would satisfy men whose business it was to know and handle other men. They bear the impress of a small and high society whose chief interest was mutually to understand the characters of one another. Discernment of character is the secret of success in courts, politics and large commercial affairs. Jan van Eyck stands in the first rank among the discerning portraitists of all time, whose works still exist. . . . The rich colouring, the glowing surfaces, the jewel-like finish of Jan's pictures were decreed quite as much by the taste of his patrons as by his own. If he came to possess matchless skill in rendering glorious pieces of goldsmith's work or richly embroidered and brocaded stuffs, it was again because his patrons loved jewelry and brocades and prided themselves upon the possession of such things. In Van Eyck, Duke Philip possessed exactly the type of painter that the taste of his rank and day would most admire."[1]

The brothers Van Eyck did not found a school. One painter only is known to have worked in their studio—one Petrus Christi (or Christus). Christi is supposed to have been born in the year 1410; he died in 1473. About 1443, he settled in Bruges where most of his extant paintings were executed. One of his best known pictures has for its theme an incident in the career of St. Eligius, who in the rôle of a goldsmith, saves a young prospective bride from a distasteful marriage by placing upon her finger a ring symbolizing her consecration to a cloistered life.

2. Roger van der Weyden

Contemporary with Jan van Eyck was Roger van der Weyden, a native of Tournay. He was born about 1400 and devoted himself to religious painting, seeking to instruct rather than to please those who saw his work, which was calculated to awaken emotion.

Roger is believed to have visited Florence and Rome; however, his contact with Italian art left him largely untouched. His style is severe, and the harsh, unpleasant aspects of his themes are usually emphasized. He painted panels and altarpieces with the usual subjects of the Nativity, Adoration, Last Judgment and so on. One of his best known works is a triptych, the central panel being a Pietà. His indifference to aerial perspective and to the use of light contribute to the somewhat unpleasant effect which his paintings are likely to exert upon the modern spectator.

Roger van der Weyden is remembered as the teacher of the great Memling and one of the best reasons for this artist's early success was his quick emancipation from the precepts of his teacher.

3. Memling

Hans Memling (or Memlinc) reveals by his given name Germanic ancestry. Probably he was born in Mainz. However, because of his early removal to Flanders, where his work was done, his paintings are appropriately considered with Flemish art.

The date of his birth is uncertain and may have been any year between 1435 and 1440. His death in 1494 is a matter of record.

Memling settled in Bruges, which was called the Venice of the North because of its princely palaces and imposing town edifices. Like Venice, Bruges was destined to see trade turn in a different direction, leaving its once thriving port to a premature decay.

Memling has been styled the Perugino of Flanders because of his proneness to repeat himself. Conway observes that it would be a pleasure to possess one Memling but monotonous to dwell with several.

His Madonnas are dignified and often lost in revery or melancholy thought seldom discernible in Flemish painting. He painted many altarpieces. One, known as *The Seven Joys of Mary,* has for its central panel a fine rendering of the Adoration. This was done for a church in Bruges but is now preserved in Munich. His *Marriage of St. Catherine* was commissioned by the founder of St. John's Hospital in Bruges. An enthroned Madonna is often copied. Best known of all his paintings is probably the *Reliquary of St. Ursula,* done in the form of a Gothic church and decorated by scenes in the saint's eventful life.

Like Hubert van Eyck, Memling made miniatures for illuminated books. It is believed that his work may be seen in the Grimani Breviary.

Memling is a general favorite and has been considered the best loved of Flemish artists. Unlike Roger, his teacher, he caught the artistic aspect of his subject and crystallized it for all time.

4. Other Early Flemish Painters

Mention should be made of Gheeraert David (1460-1523), born in Holland but a pupil of Memling. Like many another of the northern painters, he visited Italy. The requirements of the guilds were such that a certain period had to be spent in travel by journeymen before they could attain to the rank of master workmen. It was natural that those from the north turned towards Florence and Venice, while the Italians often traveled beyond the Alps.

Critics differ in their estimate of David's work. It is one of his characteristics that the various persons in his groups appear to be wholly unaware of what is going on around them. His *Marriage of St. Catherine* and *Donor with Saints* are best known.

Dierick (or Dirk) Bouts (1400-1475) was also a Dutchman who settled in Louvain. He excelled many of his contemporaries by his skilful drawing. His *Last Supper,* done in five compartments, and the series of paintings pertaining to Emperor Otto are important.

5. Characteristics of the Early Flemish School

Those who turn from the art museums of Italy to galleries containing work by the early Flemish painters are sure to be aware of a decided change. It has been well said that "the Italians raise our thoughts toward ideal beauty, while the Flemings show us the beauty of the little things that are about us every day." The Italians looked at human faces to discover beauty. The Flemings looked at them to discover character. It is well understood that life's experiences leave their ineffaceable imprint upon the physiognomy. Many a painter brushes out the wrinkles and conceals the blemishes, but not so the Flemings and the Dutch. Their portraits stand as monuments to the stormy seas their subjects have successfully weathered and reveal to the discerning weaknesses which they strove to hide from their fellow men.

Fra Filippo Lippi painted the beautiful face of his mistress many times in his Madonna pictures and we may be sure that certain of the Venetians used courtesans for models in their sacred pictures. The Flemish and Dutch held chastity to be the highest virtue of woman, and unfailing strength to be the most enviable trait of man.

Whereas Renaissance Italy accepted the old Greek proverb that beauty is truth and the highest aim of art is to reproduce it, the northern school broke entirely from such a theory, thereby emancipating art.

In 1927 a remarkable collection of Flemish paintings was assembled in London and viewed by the public for several weeks, the priceless treasures being kept constantly under heavy guard. At an address delivered on this occasion, Roger Fry touched upon Flemish characteristics as reflected in painting in this way: "Both its qualities and defects arise from the fact that these people found themselves very much at home on the surface of our planet. They were entirely satisfied with the profitable industry of their cosy, familiar townships and the rude plenty of their well-kept farms. They enjoyed the things of this life with so wholesome, so uncritical an appetite that they loved to see in their pictures vivid reminiscenses of what was so familiar and so

dear to them. Even their religion became moulded to this habitual bent of their character. It adapted itself to that and inspired a simple unquestioning and uncritical pietism which allowed even their conceptions of transcendent realities to keep homely quality and a childlike literalness."[2]

[1] Conway: *The Van Eycks and Their Followers.*
[2] Fry: *Fleming Art,* 2.
[c] Revelation VII 13-17; XIV 1-3.

THE VAN EYCKS AND MEMLING COMPARED

By Fromentin

"CONSIDER Van Eyck and Memling by the externals of their art, and it is the same art which, applied to august objects, renders them by what is most precious. Rich fabrics, pearls and gold, velvets and silks, marbles and wrought metals,—the hand occupied itself only with making the luxury and beauty of these materials felt by the luxury and beauty of labor. In that painting is still very near its origin, for it seems to understand that it struggles with the resources of the art of jewellers, engravers, and enamellers. On the other hand, we see how far it is from that. With regard to methods, there is no very apparent difference between Memling and Jan van Eyck, who preceded him by forty years. One might ask which advanced the more rapidly, and the farther. And if the dates did not show us who was the inventor and who the disciple, one would imagine, by this still greater security of result, that Van Eyck had rather profited by the lessons of Memling. At first one would think them contemporaries, so identical are their compositions, so identical their method, their archaisms being of the same period.

The main differences which appear in their execution are differences of blood, and depend upon the shades of temperament in the two natures.

In Van Eyck there is more body, muscle, and flow of blood, hence the striking virility of his faces, and the style of his pictures. He is in everything a portrait painter of the family of Holbein, precise, sharp, penetrating even to violence. He sees more truly, and also sees men stouter and shorter. The sensations he receives from the aspect of things are more robust; those which come from their tint, more intense. His palette has a plenitude, and abundance, and severity that Memling's lacks. His gamut is more equably strong, and better maintained as a whole,

and is composed of more learned values. His whites are more unctuous, his red is richer, and the indigo blue—the fine blue of the old Japanese enamel, which is his own—is more sustained by coloring principles, and of thicker substance. He is more strongly impressed by the luxury and the high price of the rare objects which abound in the luxurious habits of his time. Never did Indian Rajah adorn his clothes with more gold and jewels than Van Eyck puts into his pictures. When a picture by Van Eyck is fine,—and that of Bruges is the best example of this,—it might be called jewel work enamelled on gold, or one of those fabrics of varied colors whose warp is gold. Gold is felt everywhere, above and below. When it does not play over the surface, it appears under the tissue. It is the bond, the base, the visible or latent element, of this the most opulent painting in the world. Van Eyck is also more adroit, because his copyist hand obeys his marked preferences. He is more precise, he asseverates more; he imitates admirably. When he paints a carpet, he weaves it with a choice of the best tints. When he paints marbles, he is very near the polish of marble, and when in the shadow of his chapels, he makes the opaline lenses of his colored glass gleam, he absolutely deceives the eye.

In Memling there is the same power of tone and the same brilliancy, with less ardor and real truth. I would not dare to say that in the marvellous triptych of the St. Catherine, in spite of the extreme resonance of the coloring, its gamut is as sustained as that of his great predecessor. On the other hand, he already has misty and melting passages, and half-tints that Van Eyck never knew. The figure of the St John and that of the Donor indicate, in the way of sacrificing, in the relations of the principal light to the secondary ones, and in the connection of things with the plane they occupy, an advance since the St. Donatus, and, above all, a decided step beyond the triptych of St. Bavon. The very color of the vestments, one of dark maroon, the other a rather dull red, reveals a new art in the composition of a tone seen in shadow, and combinations of the palette, already more subtle. The handiwork is not very different. Still it differs in this: everywhere that he is sustained, ani-

mated, and moved by sentiment, Memling is as firm as Van Eyck. Everywhere, where the interest of the object is less, and particularly where the value affectionately attached to it is less, relatively to Van Eyck, he may be said to be more feeble. Gold is in his eyes only an accessory, and living nature is more studied than still life. To the heads, hands, necks, the pearly pulp of a rosy skin, he applies himself, and in them he excels, because, in fact, as soon as they are compared from the point of view of sentiment there is no longer anything in common between him and Van Eyck. A world separates them. In forty years, which is very little, there has taken place, in the way of seeing and feeling, believing and inspiring belief, a strange phenomenon, which here bursts forth like light.

Van Eyck saw with his eye, Memling begins to see with his mind. One thought well and truly; the other has not so much the air of a thinker, but his heart beats quite differently. One copied and imitated; the other also copies, imitates, and transfigures. The former reproduced, without any care for the ideal, human types, especially the masculine types which passed under his eyes in all ranks of the society of this time. The latter dreams while he looks at Nature, imagines while he translates her, chooses what is most lovely and delicate in human forms, and creates, especially as a feminine type, an elect being, unknown till then, and who has since disappeared. They are women, but women seen as he loved them, and according to the tender predilection of a mind turned towards grace, nobility, and beauty. Of this unknown image of woman, he made a real person and also an emblem. He did not embellish her, but he perceived in her what no one else had seen. It might be said that he paints her thus only because he discovers in her a charm, an attraction, and a conscience that no one else had suspected. He adorns her physically and morally. In painting the fair face of a woman, he paints a lovely soul. His application, his talent, the carefulness of his hand, are only forms of his regard, and of the tender respect he has for her.

There is no uncertainty about the epoch, the race, or the rank to which belong these fragile blond creatures, pure

and yet of this world. They are princesses of the best blood; they have the delicate lineaments, the indolent white hands, and the pallor contracted in a sequestered life. They have a natural way of wearing their clothes and diadems, of holding their missals and reading them, that is neither borrowed nor invented by a man who is a stranger to the world and to this society.

But if nature was thus, whence comes it that Van Eyck did not see it thus,—he who knew the same world, was placed in it probably in still higher station, and lived in it as a painter and gentleman of the bedchamber of John of Bavaria and later of Philip the Good, in the heart of this more than royal society? If such were the little princesses of the Court, how is it that Jan van Eyck has not given us any idea of them that is delicate, attractive and beautiful? Why did he only see the men truly? Why was there always something strong, squat, rough, or at least ugly, when he undertook to pass from masculine attributes to feminine? Why has he not visibly embellished his brother Hubert's Eve? Why is there so little decency above the Mystic Lamb, while we find in Memling all the adorable delicacy of chastity and modesty,—pretty women with the air of saints, fine honest brows, pure temples, lips without a fold; all innocence in flower, every charm enveloping the purity of angels; a beatitude, a tranquil softness, an inward ecstasy, which is found nowhere else? What grace of heaven had descended upon this young soldier or rich burgher to fill his soul with tenderness, purify his eye, cultivate his taste, and open to him, at the same time in the physical and moral worlds, such new perspectives?

Less celestially inspired than the women, the men painted by Memling resemble, no more than they, those of Van Eyck. They are gentle and sorrowful persons, rather long of body, of bronzed complexion, with straight noses, thin light beards, and pensive looks. They have fewer passions, but the same ardor. They have a less prompt and masculine muscular action, but there is found in them I know not what that is grave and tried, which gives them the look of having passed through life suffering and reflective. The St. John, whose fine Evangelical head, lost in

the half-tint, is of such velvety execution, personifies once for all the type of masculine figures as Memling conceives them. It is the same with the Donor, with his Christlike face and pointed beard. Note, I beg, that his saints, both men and women, are manifestly portraits.

They live a deep, serene, and recollected life. In this art, which is so human, there is not a trace of the villainies and atrocities of the time. Consult the work of this painter, who, however he may have lived, must have known his age; you will find in it not one of those tragic scenes which it has pleased men to represent since. Not quarterings, nor boiling pitch, except incidentally, as an anecdote, or medallion; no wrists hewed off, no skinning of naked bodies, no ferocious arrests, no assassin judges, and no executioners. The *Martyrdom of St. Hippolytus,* that is to be seen at the Cathedral of Bruges, and is attributed to him, is by Bouts, or Gerard David. Old and touching legends, like St. Ursula or St. Christopher, the Virgins, the Saints wedded to Christ, believing priests, and saints who make one believe in them, a passing pilgrim under whose features the artist is recognized,—these are Memling's figures. In all there is a good faith, a simple goodness, an ingenuousness, which are something like a prodigy; a mysticism of sentiment betrayed rather than shown, whose perfume is felt without any affectation breathed into the form; a Christian art, if you will, exempt from all mingling of pagan ideas. If Memling escapes his own age, he forgets the others. His ideal is his own; perhaps he announces the Bellini, Botticelli, and Perugino, but not Leonardo, nor Luini, nor the Tuscans, nor the Romans of the true Renascence. Here is no St. John that might be mistaken for a Bacchus; no Virgin nor St. Elizabeth, with the strangely pagan smile of a Gioconda; no prophets resembling antique gods and philosophically confounded with the sibyls; no myths nor hidden symbols. There is no need of a very learned exegesis to explain this sincere art, full of good faith, ignorance, and belief. He says what he wishes to say with the candor of the simple in heart and mind, with the naturalness of a child. He paints what was venerated and believed, as it was believed. He retires to his interior world, shuts himself in; there his soul

is lifted up and there he expands. Nothing of the exterior world penetrates into this sanctuary of souls in deep repose, —neither what is done, nor thought, nor said there, and not in the least what is there seen.

Imagine, amid the horrors of that age, a sanctuary, a sort of angelic retreat, ideally silent and sequestered, where passions are silent, where troubles cease, where men pray or worship, where everything is transfigured, physical ugliness and moral hideousness, where new sentiments are born, where, like lilies, grow ingenuousness, gentleness, a supernatural mildness, and you will have an idea of the unique soul of Memling, and of the miracle he performed in his works.

It is a singular thing, but to speak worthily of such a soul, out of regard of him to one's self, peculiar terms must be used, and in our language a sort of virginity must be reconstructed for the occasion. In this way only can he be made known; but words have been put to such uses since the time of Memling, that there is great difficulty in finding any which befit him.

6. Painting in Antwerp

The center of early Flemish painting was Bruges, as we have seen. During the fifteenth century it was the most thriving city of the Low Countries. But the tide of fortune turned; the river silted the port of Bruges and the Hapsburgs favored Antwerp. After the death of Memling, art still flourished in Bruges but it was no longer vital. Painters repeated what had been done before and fell into conventional, stereotyped ways.

Antwerp was the dominating city of the sixteenth century. Speaking of her large shipping interests, Conway concludes his comments with the observation: "Antwerp was the Chicago of those days." Her people looked to the possibilities of the future, not to the glories of the past. They were interested in humanistic thought, and Erasmus, the greatest scholar of his age, found their city congenial. Beautiful palaces arose and splendid civic buildings. It was natural that art, like learning, should flourish in such an atmosphere.

Quentin Matsys (or Massys) was the founder of the Antwerp school of painting. He was born between 1465 and 1470 and died in 1530. It is probable that Louvain was his birthplace and that he mastered the rudiments of his art there. In the year 1461 he settled in Antwerp, which was thenceforth the scene of his activity.

Matsys was a man of wide acquaintance and broad outlook. He was acquainted with the German painters, Dürer and Holbein. He painted the portrait of Erasmus and knew the distinguished men of Flanders. Whether he visited Italy has been disputed. There is reason to feel that he was influenced by Luini; however, knowledge of the Lombards might have been acquired without a sojourn in the south. Copies of paintings were often made and originals were widely distributed by this time.

Of all Flemish painters, Matsys was the first to realize that details should not receive undue attention; also he was the first to strive for unity of design. He modified the realism of the Flemish with a touch of Italian idealism. All

these innovations were constructive in the growth of northern art.

The human quality was pronounced in his religious pictures. In three of his Madonnas, mother and babe are shown in fond embrace—the so-called "kissing Madonnas." The urge of an abundant life was powerfully felt in his generation and the hold of tradition was relinquishing its hold on religious art.

Matsys painted portraits of Peter Gillis and of Erasmus, designed as gifts for Thomas More. In contrast to the stolid, ruggedly honest portraits of earlier Flemish artists, these show psychological insight. He also exhibited advance in landscapes, giving close heed to aerial perspective and allowing his figures to recede in the distance.

Probably this painter is best known by his *Money-Changer and his Wife,* (also called *The Banker and his Wife,* or *The Gold-Weigher and his Wife*) styled the first of *genre* pictures, which became numerous somewhat later. Most art lovers, if given their choice, would probably prefer this to any other of his productions.

A triptych, done as an altarpiece for the Joiners' Guild for their shrine in the Antwerp cathedral, is also well known. It was made in three panels, the central being a Pietà and the wings representing *Herod's Banquet* and the *Martyrdom of St. John.* Another triptych, entitled *The Virgin's Kin,* was made for Brussels.

Besides the various innovations which we have already noted in connection with the work of this artist, it is interesting to observe that he was the first of northern European painters to express feminine charm, something wholly lacking in the work of the Flemish primitives.

In marked contrast to Matsys, who preserved and perfected Flemish characteristics, are the Italianizers, as they have been termed—the painters who imitated Italian art, to their detriment. Among them none is more conspicuous than Mabuse.

Jan Gossart is known today as Mabuse, a form of the name of his native village, Mauberge, in Hainault. He was born about 1465 and in the year 1508 journeyed to Italy in the train of Philip of Burgundy, who employed him to make

drawings of antiques and to copy famous paintings which were not purchasable. He was impressed with Michael Angelo's employment of the nude and tried to make similar use of it. It has been said that "he started the Flemish stammering in a foreign speech which was neither Italian nor good honest Flemish."

His portrait of Archbishop Carondelet and his representation of St. Luke painting the Virgin are probably his best known works.

Another of these Italian imitators was Bernard van Orley (1491-1542), who studied in Raphael's studio. He is remembered particularly as a designer of tapestries and it is interesting to find that it was to him Raphael commissioned supervision of the weaving of the Sistine tapestries, cartoons for which are now in Kensington Museum. Van Orley was influenced by his Italian sojourn to make extensive use of architectural backgrounds.

From imitators of foreign art, it is a relief to turn to the work of a great peasant painter, too little known today: Pieter Brueghel, the second name being that of his village. "Peasant Brueghel," "Hell-fire Brueghel" and "Velvet Brueghel" are the appellations bestowed upon father and two sons. The elder Brueghel was born a peasant and painted the simple folk whom he knew best. His son Pieter, from his propensity of depicting demons and hell scenes, won his nickname and his brother acquired the nickname of Velvet by his numerous representations of fine fabrics and rich apparel worn by his subjects.

Pieter the Elder has sometimes been called a painter of drolls, because he invariably seized upon grotesque attitudes and actions of peasants at their frolics and festivals. It was his pleasure to attend village weddings, country fairs and rural gatherings, retaining in memory comical expressions and antics.

His visit to Italy seems to have left him untouched; his art remained highly individual with Nature as his guide.

Although commissioned sometimes to paint religious subjects, he was never at his best in them and the redeeming features of such paintings are usually the bits of pleasant life and activity which he incorporated in them.

Brueghel's influence upon later landscape painting was considerable. It interested him greatly but still as a background for his figures. Nevertheless he made departures from the traditional rendering of natural scenery. Conway says in this connection: "Brueghel had begun to fill his skies with features: blazing suns, drifting clouds, darts of light and sacks of shadow, scarves of mist round the necks of peaks and atmosphere enveloping them. . . . His landscape studies began to affect and with increasing prominence, the composition of his pictures."[1]

Among his winter scenes, the one entitled *Hunters in the Snow* (or *Winter Landscape*) is probably most often copied.

It was the custom for painters to make pictures illustrative of vices and virtues and especially of well known adages. Brueghel took ironical delight in so doing and made a notable representation of *The Blind leading the Blind.*

The year of his birth, like so many of these painters who often lived obscure lives, is uncertain. It is usual to accept 1525 or thereabouts, with 1570 as the time of his death.

Pieter the Younger (1564-1638) was a friend of Rubens, in association with whom he did much of his work. Jan (1568-1625) was a court painter. Neither possessed the bold energy or marked initiative of their father.

[1] Conway: *The Van Eycks,* 496.

7. Rubens

Peter Paul Rubens was so named because his birthday happened to coincide with a church festal day sacred to St. Peter and St. Paul, the twenty-eighth of June, in the year 1577. This is a momentous date in the history of Flanders, since it gave to the world the greatest of Flemish painters.

Flanders had fallen into grievous straits. Spain was determined to crush out Protestantism in the Low Countries and the iron Duke of Alva, celebrated for his atrocities, had come thither with his soldiery to butcher defenseless people, whose methods of warfare could not stand against his own. The father of Peter Paul, like many another Calvinist, fled to Germany and sometime later this child was born in Westphalia.

When about ten years of age, the father died and his mother, a woman of sterling character, returned with him to Antwerp. When we look at Rubens' version of the *Massacre of the Innocents,* we may be sure that upon his impressionable mind graphic details of similar slaughters were imprinted in childhood. When it came to staging a scene of that kind, Herod would have shrunk into obscurity by comparison with the Duke Alva.

Having exhibited a marked tendency to draw, the young Rubens was given such teachers as were available. He was well educated in other directions and early had the command of several tongues. Blessed with good looks, fine physique, sound health and charming personality, he made his way readily.

In 1600 he went into Italy and soon entered the service of the Duke of Mantua, by whom he was employed in making copies of Italian masterpieces. Having opportunity to visit all the art centers of the peninsula, he fell at once under the influence of the great colorists of Venice, Titian, Tintoretto and Paolo Veronese. Their sensuous art was something he was well fitted to understand. It made a lasting impression upon him and although he afterwards freed himself from Italian mannerisms, he found himself in Venice.

Returning to Antwerp in 1608, he soon married his first wife, Isabella Brandt, whose face appears in many of his subsequent paintings.

Orders now poured in upon Rubens, who equipped a studio in connection with his home. He possessed many excellent pictures and had made copies of numerous Italian paintings during his travels. He received pupils into his studio and was presently prepared to produce pictures in astonishing numbers.

During his lifetime, he is known to have turned out more than two thousand paintings, which fact indicates at once that much of this work was done by other hands. Everything was soon reduced to a system. One pupil was made proficient in architectural backgrounds; another, in landscape painting. One made a specialty of dogs and domestic animals while minor human figures were the care of someone else. The master designed his compositions and relegated to his train of assistants their particular tasks. He painted the principal figures and harmonized the whole into a composition that went forth under his name. Such an arrangement was entirely satisfactory to his patrons and it was not infrequently stipulated in the contracts that certain assistants were to have some part in the painting.

Rubens was a tireless producer. He possessed rugged health and inexhaustible invention. Regardless of his heavy output, he never fell into the habit of merely repeating himself, like Memling or Perugino. It is true that he represented the same themes again and again. This was to be expected, for he made a large number of altarpieces, his patrons determining what should be the subject of their order. However, such duplicated themes represent endless variety. Monotony was foreign to his robust nature.

Isabella Brandt died suddenly, leaving two children. Being of a strongly affectionate disposition, Rubens was deeply affected by his loss and yielded to the wishes of the Archduchess Isabella to undertake to negotiate a treaty with Spain and England. His acquaintance with current affairs and his broad education made him acceptable for such a mission.

It is aside from our present concerns to enter upon the success of Rubens in diplomatic circles. Suffice it to say that during his sojourn in Spain he met Velasquez; it is generally conceded that the young Spanish painter gained much by this acquaintance. Rubens was then a man of middle life and years of experience had given him ripe proficiency.

When finally able to withdraw from political affairs, he went back to Antwerp and married Helena Fourment, who was then about sixteen years of age. The decade spent with her was filled to the full with domestic happiness and he never wearied of painting her pretty face and well rounded figure. He acquired a country place and the liberal returns from his work gave him independence.

Ten years after his second marriage, Rubens fell ill and never recovered. His death was a severe loss. He had painted for the courts of France, Spain and England and wealthy art patrons of all Europe were familiar with his pictures. His death coincided with another unhappy time for his country.

a. *Rubens' Paintings*

Due to the syndicate system which Rubens initiated, a tremendous amount of work left his studio under his name, as we have already seen. Much of it was done by his assistants, several of whom were highly talented. A considerable amount of the painting executed by the master and his helpers has perished but much is preserved throughout the museums of the world and is usually attributed to Rubens regardless of the amount of work actually executed by him.

He possessed untiring energy and hand and eye were always ready to serve him. Little need had he to make repeated studies for his great compositions. His inventiveness and artistic conception never failed him. Thus it is difficult to compare him with other artists.

One of his greatest undertakings was to prepare a series of decorative pictures for the Palace of the Luxembourg, to exalt the station of Marie de' Medici and the memory of her departed husband, Henri IV. This portly representative of the ancient Florentine family lacked anything dramatic in her career, the outstanding events in which were

her arrival in France, the birth of her son, Louis XIII, and her regency. However, this did not daunt her virile painter, who set her with the Greek immortals upon the walls of the palace. The canvases pertaining to the life of Marie de' Medici are now exhibited in the Louvre. Unfortunately, the series planned to do honor to Henri IV was not executed, because of the withdrawal of Marie from France.

Some fifty landscapes are now attributed to the Rubens studio; many religious pictures were required by churches and guilds. Numerous compositions with mythological subjects were undertaken. Hourticq says of Rubens' employment of the Greek divinities: "With him, the gods, already cosmopolitan, submitted to a final transformation and were naturalized Flemings. There is no anachronism in this. It is not ridiculous to bring back again into natural life all those beautiful creatures of legend, who symbolized the birth of the forces of nature."[1]

A few of the compositions by this versatile artist stand out above the rest. The altarpiece done for the Guild of Arquebusiers for their altar in the cathedral of Antwerp is usually accounted to be Rubens' masterpiece—the famous *Descent from the Cross.* It was made in three panels, the Presentation and Visitation occupying the two wings, which when closed show St. Christopher, the patron saint of the guild, carrying the Christ Child. *The Elevation of the Cross* and the altarpiece called the *Way of the Cross,* this last in Brussels, are all well known. Rubens made several renditions of the *Adoration of the Magi,* the one in Madrid being noteworthy. His *Last Communion of St. Francis* in the minds of some critics equals the perfection of the *Descent from the Cross* and it may well be questioned whether this artist ever made a simpler, stronger and more pleasing design than that of St. Ambrose forbidding Theodosius entrance to the Temple. The Assumption of the Virgin was a theme often desired by patrons. Rubens adapted the design of Titian to his own purposes and made of it something new.

The various portrait pictures of the painter and Isabella Brandt and of Helena Fourment alone and with her children are often copied. Four children were born to Rubens and

Helena Fourment. The frolic of babies set the painter to depicting any number of cherubs and amouretti. Of all his landscapes, the one representing his own country place, the Chateau of Steen, is a general favorite.

Among the mythological pieces, the *Judgment of Paris* is memorable. However, there are many that are widely admired. On the other hand, such a composition as *The Battle of the Amazons* is a tangle that few confess themselves able to fathom.

Rubens delighted in violent attitudes of the human body; for this reason he liked to depict his figures as racked with pain or engaged in strenuous activity. The foreshortening of Mantegna, which he had ample opportunity to study at the Court of Mantua, led him to make many an experiment.

Faure is an ardent admirer of Rubens. In a few sentences culled from his discussion of Rubens' career, he says: "What a life! He was the only hero of humanity, doubtless, to unite the splendors of external life with the splendid images of it which he made. The period, in which the aristocracy had for two hundred years been receiving its education in art and had been charmed by his taste for the sumptuous, had conspired to have him maintain, till the end, his exceptional balance between moral health and sensualism. He was like a king of Flanders; he represented it to the kings. . . .

Rubens handles the forms of the world as though they were a malleable paste, which one lengthens and shortens, which one reduces or separates, which one drags and distributes throughout the whole work, as a god, recreating life, would impose a new order upon the tumult that life would have as it issues from him. Everything in life is evolving. . . . Whether he paints myth, history, landscape, the market, sport, fighting, or portrait, Rubens has no other subject than the indefatigable pursuit, through a thousand symbols, of nature in action, of the dynamism of life, whose immense river sweeps through him without his ever being able to exhaust its overflowing waters and without any decrease of his powers through his attempts to exhaust them.

"Everything that came before his eyes during his whole superb existence became an element, at once fiery and docile, of his unified and dramatic conception of nature. Never did he study anything for itself, for the moral and material life which radiates from any object when one studies its secret life. . . . Like those who love everything that lives, everything that dies, everything that is, he seemed indifferent to the intimate dramas of the heart. He had no time to stop to choose. He opened his breast to all."[2]

Rubens exerted an overwhelming influence upon art for generations. To this day none has been able to rival him as a colorist; none other has approached him in inventiveness and originality. He revolutionized composition during his thirty years of productivity and expanded the subjects available for the painter to the interests of mankind.

Many there are who consider him to be of the flesh fleshly, and apply such words as coarse and vulgar to his productions. However, it should always be kept in mind that he did not create his compositions to be viewed near at hand, in an art museum. The majority of them were designed to be seen from afar, on high ceilings or distant walls or by worshipers in the opposite end of a spacious church. Figures must of necessity be bold if they were not to be lost in a blur when viewed in the distance.

After all has been said, whether or not one enjoys Rubens largely depends upon his outlook. The healthy, wholesome, red-blooded creatures of the earth, who accept the appeal of perfect bodies wherein to enshrine mind and soul, are bound to appreciate him; while those who would forget the body and think only of mind are sure to complain of one who set so many rapturously happy, well nourished frames upon canvas.

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[1] Hourticq: *Rubens*, 80.
[2] Faure: *Modern Painting*, 6; 14.

8. Van Dyck

Anton van Dyck (1599-1641) was one of the numerous assistants who thronged around Rubens' studio. Beyond doubt, he was highly gifted by nature. It is said that he came under the training of the master in his thirteenth year. This has not been thoroughly substantiated.

It would be difficult to find two men more unlike than Rubens and his talented pupil. Van Dyck was an aristocrat, which circumstance at the start shut him away from much that was vital to the greater artist. Erratic, difficult to get along with, quick to take offense, indifferent to the feelings of others, it is plain that the way would not lie smooth before one of such a temperament.

He traveled extensively in Italy, painted many portraits in Genoa and elsewhere in course of his journeyings. Van Dyck was obviously envious of the reputation of Rubens and tried to establish himself in Antwerp during his teacher's absence in Spain. Later, he accepted the invitation of Charles I of England to his court and painted many portraits of the king and his family. These are probably the best known of all his compositions.

Van Dyck was at his best in portraiture but he was by no means limited to this type of work. Fifty religious paintings have been traced to him and half as many mythological subjects.

The catastrophe that shortly overtook the Stuart king set Van Dyck adrift. Upon the death of Rubens he tried to obtain some of the latter's unfinished commissions but his arrogant attitude repelled those who might have engaged his services. He died at the early age of forty-two, spent with self-indulgence and disease.

It has well been said that Van Dyck taught the world how aristocrats ought to look. He had a splendid subject in the finical Charles I and his portraits of the royal family are deservedly loved.

His influence on English painting was not altogether constructive. Rather, Van Dyck began that school of prettiness which was to have so long a vogue in English portraiture.

Teniers

Among the other followers of Rubens, the elder Teniers should be mentioned, as well as one Snyders, the animal painter, and several others who won distinction for their ability to do special feature work. David Teniers, the elder, was successful in representing low life, his tavern scenes and humble folk of coarse, crude habits being familiar. His son, also named .David (1610-1690), was likewise a painter but lacked the vigor of his father. Teniers the Younger served as court painter to the Spanish Viceroy after 1650.

THE ELEVATION OF THE CROSS AND THE CRUCIFIXION

By Fromentin

MANY people say Antwerp, but many too say the Home of Rubens; and this way of speaking expresses still more exactly all the things which make the magic of the place,—a great city, a great personal destiny, a famous school, and pictures ultra-celebrated. All this is imposing, and the imagination becomes more than usually active, when in the midst of the Place Verte is seen the statue of Rubens, and beyond, the old Basilica, where are preserved the triptychs which, humanly speaking, have consecrated it. The statue is not a masterpiece, but it is he in his own home. Under the figure of a man who was merely a painter, with the attributes only of a painter, in very truth is personified the sole Flemish royalty which has been neither contested nor menaced, and which certainly never will be so. . . .

It is the hour of three,—the clock in the air has just struck; hardly a sacristan makes a sound in the quiet naves, clean and bright as Peter Neefs has reproduced them, with an inimitable sentiment of their solitude and their grandeur. It rains, and the light is changing; gleams and shadows succeed each other upon the two triptychs, attached unostentatiously, in their narrow frames of brown wood, to the cold smooth walls of the transepts; yet these superb paintings only appear more distinct amid the glaring lights and the obscurities which struggle with them. German copyists have established their easels before the *Descent from the Cross,* but there is no one before the *Elevation of the Cross.* This simple fact expresses sufficiently the world's opinion of these two works.

They are much admired, almost without reserve, and the fact is rare for Rubens; but admiration is divided. Great renown has preferred the *Descent from the Cross;* the *Elevation of the Cross* has the gift of touching more

deeply the passionate or more thoroughly persuaded friends of Rubens. Nothing indeed can be more unlike than these two works, conceived at an interval of two years, inspired by the same effort of mind, and which yet bear so clearly the marks of his two tendencies. The *Descent from the Cross* is of 1610, the *Elevation of the Cross* of 1612. I insist upon the dates, for they are important. Rubens had just returned to Antwerp, and it was, so to speak, upon landing that he painted them. His education was completed. At that time he had made an excessive amount of studies, rather too oppressive for him, of which he meant to make use openly, once for all, but of which he was to get rid almost immediately. Each one of the Italian masters whom he had consulted of course advised him differently. The violent masters advised him to dare great things; the severe masters recommended him greatly to restrain himself. Nature, temper, native faculties, former lessons, recent lessons, everything was prepared to divide him; the task itself required him to separate his fine gifts into two parts. He felt the occasion, seized it, treated each subject according to its own spirit, and gave of himself two contrary and yet just ideas, —one the most magnificent example of his wisdom, the other the most astounding revelation of his dash and ardor. Add to the personal inspiration of the painter a very marked Italian influence, and you will better understand the extraordinary value that posterity attaches to these pages, which may be considered his masterworks, and which were the first public act of his life as the head of a school. . . .

The composition does not need describing. Not one can be cited that is more popular as a work of art and as a page of religious character. There is no one who does not bear in mind the arrangement and effect of the picture, its great central light against a dark background, its grand masses of color, its distinct and massive divisions. It is known that Rubens got the first idea of it in Italy, and that he made no effort to conceal that he borrowed it. The scene is powerful and grave. It has an effect from a distance, is strongly marked upon the wall; it is serious, and produces seriousness. When the murders are remembered with which the work of Rubens is bloody, the massacres, the torturing

executioners, using pincers and exciting roars of anguish, it is evident that this is a noble suffering. Everything is as restrained, concise, and laconic as a page of Scripture.

Here are neither gesticulations, nor cries, nor horrors, nor excessive tears; scarcely one real sob bursts from the Virgin; and thus the intense mournfulness of the drama is expressed by a gesture of the inconsolable mother, by a face bathed in tears, and reddened eyes. The Christ is one of the most elegant figures that Rubens ever imagined in order to paint a God. It has an inexpressible slender grace, pliant and almost meagre, which gives it all the delicacy of nature, and all the distinction of a fine academic study. Its moderation is subtle, its taste perfect, the drawing very nearly equals the sentiment.

You cannot have forgotten the effect of this long body, slightly out of joint, with the little head, so thin and delicate, fallen on one side, so livid, and so perfectly limpid in its pallor, neither contracted nor distorted; whence all pain has passed away, and which falls with such blessedness for a moment into the strange beauty of the death of the righteous. Remember how heavy and how precious it is to bear, in what an exhausted attitude it glides along the winding sheet, with what affectionate anguish it is received by the extended arms and hands of women. Can anything be more touching? One of its feet, livid and scarred with the nails, touches at the foot of the cross the naked shoulder of the Magdalen. It does not bear upon, it lightly brushes it. The contact cannot be perceived; it is divined rather than seen. It would have been profane to emphasize it; it would have been cruel not to let it be believed. All the furtive sensibility of Rubens is in this imperceptible contact, which says so much respecting everything, and touches all with tenderness.

The Magdalen is admirable; it is incontestably the best piece of workmanship in the picture, the most delicate, the most personal, one of the best also that Rubens ever executed in his career so fertile in the invention of feminine beauty. This delicious figure has its legend; how could it fail to have one, its very perfection having become legendary? It is probable that this fair girl with the dark eyes,

firm look, and clean-cut profile is a portrait, and that portrait one of Isabel Brandt, whom he had married two years before, and who also served him as a model for the Virgin of the Visitation in the wing of the triptych. However, in seeing this ampleness of person, the blond hair, and rounded proportions, one thinks of what will be one day the splendid and individual charm of the beautiful Helen Fourment whom he married twenty years after. From the first to the last, a tenacious type seemed to be lodged in the heart of Rubens, a fixed ideal haunted his amorous and constant imagination. He pleases himself with it, completes it, finishes it; he pursues it after a fashion in his two marriages, as he does not cease to pursue it in his works. There is always something of Isabel and Helen in the women that Rubens painted from each of them. In the first he seems to put some preconceived feature of the second; in the second he introduces a sort of ineffaceable memory of the first. At the date we speak of, he possessed one and was inspired by her; the other is not yet born, and still he divines her. Already the future mingles with the present, the real with the ideal divination; when the image appears, it has its double form. Not only is it exquisite, but not a feature is wanting to it. Does it not seem as if, in perpetuating it thus from the first day, Rubens meant that it should be forgotten neither by himself nor by any one?

Moreover, it is the sole, mundane grace with which he has embellished this austere picture, slightly monastic, absolutely evangelical, if by that is understood gravity of sentiment and manner, and the rigor be considered with which such a mind must have restrained itself. On this occasion, as you will guess, a large part of his reserve came from his Italian education, as well as the respect he accorded to his subject.

The canvas is dark in spite of its brilliancy and the extraordinary whiteness of the winding-sheet. In spite of its relief, the painting is *flat*. It is a picture with blackish undertones, on which are placed large firm lights, destitute of shades. The coloring is not very rich; it is full, sustained, calculated with precision to have an effect from a distance. He constructs the picture, frames it, expresses the weak

points and the strong, and does not seek to embellish it at all. It is composed of a green almost black, of an absolute black, of a rather dull red, and a white. These four tones are set side by side as frankly as four notes of such violence can be. The contact is abrupt, but they do not suffer from it. In the high light the corpse of Christ is drawn with a delicate and supple line, and modelled by its own reliefs, with no effort in the shading, thanks to imperceptible gradation of values. There is nothing shining, not a single division in the lights, hardly a detail in the dark parts. All of this is of a singular breadth and rigidity. The edges are narrow, the half-tints simple, except in the Christ, where the undertints of ultramarine have obtruded, and now make some useless spots. The material is smooth, compact, flowing easily and prudently. At the distance from which we examine it, the handiwork disappears, but it is easy to divine that it is excellent, and directed with perfect security by a mind inured to good habits, who conforms to them, applies himself, and is determined to do well. Rubens recollects himself, observes himself, restrains himself, and, taking possession of all his forces, subordinates them, and only half makes use of them.

Between the central panel of the *Descent from the Cross* and the *Elevation of the Cross,* which decorates the northern transept, everything has changed,—the point of view, tendency, bearing, even a few of the methods, and the influences which the two works feel so differently. A glance suffices to convince you of this. And if one considers the period when these significant pages appeared, it can be understood that if the one was more satisfying and more convincing, the other must have been more astonishing, and consequently have caused the perception of something much more novel. Less perfect, because it is more stirring, and because it contains no figure so perfectly lovely to see as the Magdalen, the *Elevation of the Cross* conveys much more of the originality of Rubens, more of his impetuosity, his audacity, his happy hits,—in a word, more of the fermentation of that mind full of fervor for novelties and projects. It opens a wider career. It is possible that it is finished in a less masterly manner, but it announces a

master of a very different originality, who is both daring and powerful. The drawing is stiffer, less delicate, the forms more violent, the modelling less simple and rougher; but the coloring already shows profound warmth, and that resonance which will be Rubens's great resource when he neglects vivacity of tone for the sake of radiance. Imagine the color more flaming, the outlines less hard, the setting less rough; remove this grain of Italian stiffness, which is only a kind of knowledge of the world, and a gravity of demeanor, contracted during the journey; look only at what is Rubens's own,—the youth, the fire, the already mature convictions,—and little is wanting to have before your eyes Rubens in his best days; in fine, this is the first and last word of his fiery and rapid manner. The slightest latitude would make of this picture, relatively severe, one of the most turbulent that he ever painted. Such as it is, with its sombre amber tints, its strong shadows, the low muttering of its stormy harmonies, it is still one of those in which his ardor bursts forth even more evidently because it is sustained by the most manly effort maintained to the very end by the determination not to fail.

It is a picture of impulse, conceived around a very audacious arabesque, which, in its complication of forms displayed and concealed, of bent bodies, of extended arms, of repeated curves, of rigid lines, preserves throughout the work the instantaneous character of a sketch struck off with sentiment in a few seconds. The first conception, the arrangement, effect, gestures, faces, the caprice of color, the handiwork,—all seem to be the sudden result of an irresistible, lucid, and prompt inspiration. Never will Rubens use greater emphasis to express a page apparently so sudden.

Today, as in 1610, there may be a difference of opinion about this work, which is absolutely personal in spirit, if not in manner. The question which must have been agitated during the life of the painter is still pending; it consists in deciding which would have been best represented in his country and in history,—Rubens before he was himself, or Rubens as he always was.

The *Elevation of the Cross* and the *Descent from the Cross* are the two moments of that drama of Calvary whose prologue we have seen in the triumphal picture at Brussels. At the distance apart that the two pictures are placed, the principal spots of color can be perceived, their dominant tone seized, I might say that their sound might be heard. This is sufficient for briefly understanding their picturesque expression and divining their meaning.

In the other we were present at the ending, and I have told you with what solemn sobriety it is exhibited. All is over. It is night, or at least the horizon is of leaden black. All are silent, in tears; receiving the august remains, they display most tender care. Hardly are interchanged those words which the lips speak after the death of those who were dear. The mother and the friends are there, and above all, the most loving and the weakest of women, she in whose fragility and grace and repentance are incarnated all the sins of the earth, pardoned, expiated, and now atoned for. Living flesh is opposed to funereal pallor. There is a charm even in the dead body. The Christ seems like a fair flower cut down. He hears no longer those who blasphemed him. He has ceased to hear those who weep for him. He belongs no longer to man, nor to time, nor to anger, nor pity. He is beyond all, even death.

Here there is nothing of that kind. Compassion, tenderness, mother and friends, are far off. In the left wing the painter has assembled all the friendliness of grief in a violent group, in lamenting or despairing attitudes. In the right wing there are only two mounted guards, and on that side there is no mercy. In the center there are cries, blasphemies, insults, and the trampling of feet. With brute efforts, butcher-like executioners plant the cross, and labor to raise it erect in the canvas. Arms clench, ropes stretch, the cross wavers, and is only half-way up. Death is certain. A Man, nailed by his four members, suffers, agonizes, and forgives with his whole being. Nothing that belongs to him is free, a pitiless fatality has seized his body, the soul alone escapes from it. This is thoroughly felt in this upward glance which turns from earth, and, seeking its certainty elsewhere, goes straight to heaven. All that

human ferocity can express of its thirst for slaughter, and its promptness in doing its work, the painter expresses like a man who understands the effect of anger, and knows the workings of savage passions. And all the gentleness of human nature, the bliss in dying of a martyr who gives himself to the sacrifice,—look attentively and see how he translates it!

The Christ is in light; he gathers into a narrow sheaf almost all the lights disseminated in the picture. Plastically he is less excellent than the one in the *Descent from the Cross.* A Roman painter would have certainly corrected the style of the figure. A Gothic artist would have desired more salient bones, fibres more strained, ligaments more precise, the whole structure more meagre, or perhaps only more delicate. Rubens had, you know, a preference for the full health of form, which belonged to his manner of feeling, and still more to his manner of painting, and without which it would have been necessary for him to change the greater part of his formulas. With that exception the picture is beyond price. No man but Rubens could have imagined it as it is, in the place it occupies, in the highly picturesque acceptation he has given it. And as to that fine head, inspired and suffering, manly and tender, with the hair clinging to the temples, its sweat, its glow, its agony, its eyes reflecting celestial beams, and its ectasy,—who is the sincere master, even in the palmy days of Italy, who would not have been struck by what force of expression can do when it reaches this degree, and who would not in it have recognized a dramatic ideal of art absolutely novel?

Pure sentiment came, on one day of fever and clear insight, to lead Rubens as far as he could go. Afterwards he will become more free, he will develop still more. There will be, thanks to his flowing and absolutely unfettered manner, more consecutiveness and notably more method in all parts of his work, in the exterior and interior drawing, the color, and the workmanship. He will mark less imperiously the outlines which should disappear; he will arrest less suddenly the shadows which ought to melt away; he will acquire a suppleness which does not exist here; he will

gain more agile modes of speech, a language of a more pathetic and personal turn. But will he find anything clearer and more energetic than the inspired diagonal which cuts his composition in two; first makes it hesitate in its perpendicular, then straightens it, and directs it to the top, with the active and resolute flight of a lofty idea? Will he find anything better than these sombre rocks, this faded sky, this great white figure in full brilliancy against the shadows, motionless and yet moving, that a mechanical impulse pushes diagonally across the canvas, with its pierced hands, its oblique arms, and that grand gesture of clemency which makes them balance widely opened over the blind, and black, and wicked world?

If one could doubt the power of a successful line, of the dramatic value of an arabesque, and an effect,—finally, if examples were wanting to prove the moral beauty of a picturesque conception,—one would be convinced of it after this.

It was by this original and masculine picture, that this young man, having been absent ever since the first of the year of the century, signalized his return from Italy. What he had acquired in his journeys, the nature and the choice of his studies, above all, the human fashion which he intended to use, were known; and no one doubted his destiny,—neither those whom this picture astonished like a revelation, nor those whom it shocked like a scandal; those whose doctrines it overturned and who attacked it, nor those whom it converted and carried away. The name of Rubens was sacred at that day. Even today very little is wanting for that first work to appear as accomplished as it seemed, and was, decisive. There is here, too, an inexpressible individuality, like a great breath, that is rarely found elsewhere in Rubens. An enthusiast would write *sublime*, and he would not be wrong if he could determine precisely the signification proper to attach to that term. At Brussels and Mechlin have I not said everything concerning the so diverse gifts of this composer of vast compass, whose fire is a sort of exalted good sense? I have spoken of his ideal, so different from that of others, of the dazzling nature of his palette, of the radiance of his ideas

full of illumination, of his persuasive force, of his oratorical clearness, of his leaning towards apotheoses which elevate him, of that heated brain which expands at the risk of inflating him. All this leads us to a still more complete definition, to a word that I am going to say, which says everything,—Rubens is a lyric, and the most lyrical of all painters. His imaginative promptness, the intensity of his style, his sonorous and progressive rhythm, the range of this rhythm, its passage, which might be called vertical,—call this lyric art, and you will not be far from the truth.

There is in literature a form, the most heroic of all, that it has been agreed to call the *ode*. It is, as you know, the most agile and the most sparkling of the varied forms of metrical language. There never can be too great breadth, nor too much enthusiasm in the ascending movement of the strophes, nor too great light at their summit. Now I might cite for you a picture by Rubens, conceived, conducted, scanned, illuminated like the proudest verses written in Pindaric form. The Elevation of the Cross would furnish me the best example, an example so much the more striking in that everything here is in harmony, and the subject was worthy of being thus expressed. And I shall not merit the reproach of subtlety if I tell you that this page of pure expansion is written from one end to the other in the form rhetorically called *sublime*,—from the leaping lines that cross it, the idea which becomes more luminous as it reaches its culmination, to the inimitable head of Christ which is the dominant and expressive note of the poem, the sparkling note, in the idea it contains, that is, the final strophe.

DUTCH PAINTING

THE general student of painting has little concern with the Dutch primitives, for evidences of their accomplishment are scanty indeed. Until the separation of the northern provinces from the rest, the Low Countries are usually treated as a whole. The seven provinces which finally espoused Protestantism and went their way apart from the Flemings were of less importance economically to the Dukes of Burgundy and to the Hapsburgs and consequently less is heard of them.

We have seen that some of the painters usually classed with the Flemings were of Dutch birth and ancestry; cite, for example, David and Bosch. Leyden and Haarlem were centers of Dutch painting and something is known of the so-called Master of Delft, although it is not altogether certain that he was a Dutchman. Certainly his work bore a distinctly Italian stamp. Dutch artists of the sixteenth century were largely under the influence of Italian painters.

With the frenzy of religious enthusiasm, the Protestants of The Netherlands waged a crusade against religious art in 1566, because of its inseparable association with Catholicism. This accounts for the paucity of paintings by the Primitives.

Something remains of the production of Lucas van Leyden, who is said to have been as accomplished an engraver as Dürer. His real name was Luc Jacobsz, but he is known today as Lucas van Leyden, the "patriarch of Dutch painting." His teacher was Engelbrechtsen, a friend of Dürer, whose art was modified by the influence of both Flemish and German painting. An *Adoration of the Magi,* a *Last Judgment* and another picture wholly different in character, *A Card Party,* are extant paintings attributed to Lucas.

The sixteenth century is remembered for its wars of religious persecution. Reference has been made before to the evil days that fell upon the Low Countries when the

inattention of Charles V gave way to the aggressiveness of Philip II, his bigoted son. At first, all seventeen provinces were united against the military government of the Duke of Alva. Later, the Flemings, who remained devout Catholics, were reconciled to Spanish rule. The sturdy northern provinces refused to yield; banded together under the leadership of William of Orange, they steadily fought on until their independence was first conceded and finally publicly acknowledged by the Peace of Münster, in 1648.

Having passed through fires of war and ravage, the Dutch were proud of their newly won freedom. They could not extol too greatly the valor that had released them from the hated Spanish rule. They held aloof from other peoples and their art became highly nationalistic.

At first their painters were deprived of patrons, for under Burgundian and Hapsburg dukes they had largely depended upon royal encouragement. Moreover, having withdrawn from a church system ever favorable to art and continually requiring the service of the painter, to the simplicity of the early reformed church, wherein art was not tolerated, the lot of the Dutch artists was at first precarious. Some yielded to the temptation to remove to the more favorable atmosphere of Flanders. The majority turned their attention to civic and domestic demands. Due to the considerable numbers of painters and the limited demand for their work, it came about that the simplest householder possessed some good pictures for the edification of his family.

The field of art among the Dutch of the seventeenth century was at first prescribed. A painter turned to portraits, single or in groups, or he interested himself in the so-called *genre* picture—little scenes of the people at work, at home, or in moments of relaxation and ease—or he worked with landscape. Some became skilful in all three types of painting.

It would be idle to search among Dutch paintings for mighty themes. Rather, they are concerned with homely life, humble scenes, with portraiture and views of land and sea. Regarding the outlook of the Dutch painters Inness

says: "They wished to reproduce objects visible to the eye with such extreme exactness that we might believe them to be reflected in a mirror. They discovered most cleverly how to render the exact texture of the objects under observation: Silks, satin, velvet, lawn, brocade will be exhibited almost with the connoisseur knowledge of a salesman. Cheese, carrots, onions, fish, raw meat will be displayed in such a way as to instruct the conscientious cook about to disburse her mistress's money. It is very clever of the Dutch painter to be able to do these things. But they can rise higher; they can see a landscape with all its obvious features and its various tones of color; and they can see the men and women of their day."[1]

After the dawn of the seventeenth century we no longer find the Guilds commissioning painters to make pictures of their patron saints to adorn their walls. Instead, they desired portraits of their officers and of groups of people who served on their boards and committees. Shooting companies were prominent in a land where disturbances had been rife for well nigh a hundred years and where liberty had been won by the doggedness of the private soldier. The shooting butt was known as a Doele and the meeting hall was the Doelen, to which we find many references. Other groups were composed of syndics or merchants; of regents or governing members of public charities and Rembrandt will always be remembered for his "Students in Clinics." Aside from such group portraiture as this, domestic scenes attracted wide attention, as has been said. Still-life was also popular.

Oil was the usual medium in The Netherlands, for the prevailing dampness made fresco impracticable.

1. Frans Hals

We need but to look at a portrait of Hals to know that generations of portraitists had preceded him. Many of them are no longer remembered, but at least one name deserves mention, although he was only a few years older than Hals and scarcely a predecessor: Jan Ravesteyn would be worthy of study had he painted nothing more than the *Portrait of a Lady,* now to be seen in Brussels.

The parents of Frans Hals removed from Haarlem to Antwerp, where their distinguished son was born in 1584. When he was ready to enter upon an independent career he turned to the native home of his parents and it is with Haarlem that we always associate him. Some of his best known paintings have been collected by this city and are exhibited today in their Town Hall.

Frans Hals was a man of jovial nature and convivial habits. The taverns knew him well. While it is usually said that he painted people of the lower classes this is not strictly the case. Like most painters, he accepted commissions wherever obtainable, and not all his subjects by any means were tipplers. His range of interest was narrow, but within it he saw with penetrating eyes. The conceit of a private, elevated to higher rank; the shrewdness of one person, the irresponsibility of another—qualities such as these were never hidden so far away as to escape his eye which saw much that escapes the majority. Hals wasted no time in preparatory sketches. He seized his brush and set upon canvas those portraits which are the delight of all who look upon them and which led Fromentin to exclaim: "Never has any one painted better nor ever will."

His earliest known commission was to paint the Company of St. George, one of the many shooting companies. He chose to arrange them just as they drew away from a banqueting table, without any attempt to pose them. Another group, done not long after, was painted in the open with natural trees for a background. Both these paintings are now in Haarlem. His self-portrait with his second wife is even better known, since it is frequently copied. It is now in the museum of Amsterdam. This wife seems to have been temperamentally suited to her very unconventional husband. She bore him seven sons, five of whom were painters, although none displayed the genius of their father.

Hals painted portraits until he was eighty-four years of age. His late life found his realistic style superseded and he and his wife suffered privation and want. Not until a later age did men discern how far he surpassed those painters who held popular favor after he lost it.

Some of his pictures have found their way to the United States. His *Jolly Toper,* in the Riyks Museum; *Portrait of an Officer,* and of *Hille Bobbe, the Fishwoman,* are often reproduced.

Frans Hals freed Dutch art from Italian influence. Thenceforward his talented countrymen were to follow their natural bent, without a suspicion of Italianism in their work. This was profoundly significant for the future of Dutch painting.

Faure says: "Dutch art is of a single block, remains until its last hour within the material and moral limits of Holland, and, from the beginning to the end, reveals the inner forces brought violently to the light by the revolution. It is the most strongly and uniquely national affirmation that history has to show."[2]

[1] Inness: *History of Painting,* 235.
[2] Faure: *Modern Art,* 39.

2. Rembrandt

Rembrandt was born a Dutchman, as Dante was born an Italian and Shakespeare an Englishman; however, in all three instances, nature molded citizens of the wide world, capable of speaking to the hearts of their fellowmen, regardless of age or clime. No other Dutch painter and only a few painters in history take rank with this genius who influenced art so profoundly.

Rembrandt was born in Leyden, in 1606, the son of a prosperous miller. While his brothers were started early in business, he was sent to the local university to study law. However, his devotion to the pencil and brush persuaded his father finally to allow him to enter the studio of a Leyden painter, where he learned something of his chosen work. Later he went to Amsterdam and in the studio of Pieter Lastman became proficient as an etcher. Lastman had studied in Italy and beyond doubt started his young pupil on his life-long investigation of contrasting light and shadow.

Having gained more than a rudimentary knowledge of art, Rembrandt now returned to his home in Leyden and continued to perfect himself by endless experiment and study. He worked far into the night and pupils soon gathered around him eager for his instruction, Dou conspicuous among them.

After the death of his father, he removed to Amsterdam, where the prospects were brighter than in his native town for a striving artist, who must have patrons. His friend, Hendrick van Uylenborch, offered him a home until he could get located; his friendship with this art dealer was important, for Rembrandt afterwards married his cousin, Saskia van Uylenborch.

It so happened that the young artist soon received an important commission which brought him immediate, if transitory, success. He was chosen to paint a group picture for Doctor Tulp, for presentation to the Guild of Surgeons. Of this we shall speak again.

Promise of a bright future led Rembrandt to marry in 1634, and the eight years wherein the beautiful Saskia ruled

his heart were the happiest of his life. Sorrows overtook the couple, who were thoroughly companionable in their domestic life, for one after another, their children died in infancy. Saskia's dowry enabled Rembrandt to establish himself advantageously in a substantial way and students flocked to him.

The artist lacked the business sagacity usually to be found among the thrifty Dutch. Despite Saskia's good management, her husband was never able to make ends meet. He was extremely fond of fine paintings, antiques, fine jewels, with which he adorned her, and various other luxuries with which he adorned his studio. As a result, after the death of Saskia, in 1642, his creditors pressed him insistently. Even during their married life the two had been embroiled in family disputes regarding property, for Saskia belonged to a well established family and her kinsfolk did not look favorably upon her marriage to an impractical painter who squandered his wealth so recklessly. She left an infant, Titus, and while her property was left to the management of Rembrandt, it was left in trust for the son. This led her relatives to demand a property adjustment for the protection of the child.

It is a wearisome story, the countless difficulties in which Rembrandt found himself engulfed. He felt the loss of his wife bitterly, and the details of business matters were throughout beyond his understanding. The result was a foregone conclusion: his beautiful home was lost to him, together with all his collection of paintings, sold by an auctioneer for only a trifling part of their real value. In his early fifties Rembrandt found himself a wanderer, homeless and deprived of the comfort of his dearly loved art collection.

A woman of humble station but intrinsic worth brought into his later life such comfort as he knew: one Hendrickje Stoffle. She first cared for the motherless Titus and afterwards bore Rembrandt a daughter, named Cornelia, in memory of Rembrandt's mother. Whether Henrickje and Rembrandt were ever married is not known; support to the supposition was given some years later when she made a will. However, she cared for the two children and made

a home in which Rembrandt found some respite from the trials of a harassed life. Yet the phrase is misleading, for in spite of all he suffered, Rembrandt retained throughout a detached attitude, finding in his art solace for the ills of fortune. The hardest blow after the loss of Saskia was the loss of public favor. Fame deserted him as suddenly as it had overtaken him. Chosen to paint a group picture for a shooting company, he decided to depart from the customary plan in order to create a painting vibrant with action. He chose a moment when the officers were about to marshal their men into line and consequently only a few of those who had contributed to the cost of the picture were satisfactorily shown in it. This caused so much resentment that not until the close of his life did he ever receive another such commission. Whereas patrons had thronged around him during his earlier years, when the anatomy lesson was freshly in mind, they now sought more tactful painters for their groups and Rembrandt was almost deserted. Nevertheless, he continued to make etchings and to paint.

Amsterdam was a progressive city at this time. Thought was broader here than in less cosmopolitan parts of The Netherlands. The Jewish people, who were unwelcome in some countries, were free to dwell herein, and Rembrandt never tired of studying them and rejoiced in the touch of orientalism they gave to the city. He lived among them and seized upon every unusual face as a model for an etching or drawing.

Titus, the pride of his father's heart, the more since he resembled his mother and called to mind the happy years forever passed, grew to manhood and was married in 1667. A few months later he died, leaving his father without ties to bind him longer to earth. Sunk in deep poverty, the neglected artist breathed his last the following year, having lived long enough to see his little granddaughter christened by the name Titia.

The troubles, perplexities and sorrows that befell Rembrandt would have crushed the majority of men much sooner. In his hours of pain and neglect, he turned to the Bible, which had been a sustaining factor in his mother's

life. Unhampered by tradition, he interpreted the Scriptures in his own way and paralleled his bereaved condition to that of certain biblical characters. Upon the death of his eldest son, he painted a picture of *Abraham's Sacrifice.* When Saskia slipped away from his loving care, he composed his *Death of Mary.* In the face of a rabbi he set the sorrows of the Hebrew race, all the ills to which mortal flesh is heir.

One critic calls Rembrandt's paintings "psychological documents," but they pertain to the emotions rather than the mind. The intellectual aspect of matters did not attract Rembrandt as it had attracted the Florentines. Rather, as has well been said, he saw art as "the emotional utterance of the impressions of life." He painted to express the emotions and it was always the great realm of feeling, so little comprehended, that held him. Experience taught him that the soul may remain untroubled by the vicissitudes of earthly existence and even in the midst of privation, neglect and unappreciation of his art, he continued on his way, persuaded that he must follow his own intuitions and let the world go by. Thus it is not in the conflicts of daily happenings or in the loss of persons dear to him that we may know Rembrandt, but in the paintings wherein he revealed himself.

a. *Rembrandt's Paintings*

Lovers of Rembrandt must always owe a debt of gratitude to the art critic, John C. van Dyke, for having brought some order out of the chaos which until lately surrounded the subject of his paintings. Until Van Dyke published his conclusions, many hundreds of paintings were attributed to Rembrandt, to say nothing of a thousand etchings and drawings. Van Dyke's suspicions were aroused by the fact that while the master had such a prolific production, his seventy known pupils were accredited wtih comparatively few pictures. He could not understand why they collectively should not have been able to produce as many pictures as Rembrandt had painted alone. This led to a thorough examination of the subject, his scholarly discussion of which should be perused entire.[x]

Careful study of numerous Rembrandt paintings disclosed that much of the work attributed to the master in the great art galleries of the world had actually been done by his numerous pupils, to whom only inferior productions, in some cases, had been spared. In some instances, signatures had been deliberately forged by art dealers, who craved the monetary advantage of disposing of a genuine Rembrandt. In other cases, uncertainty had been conceded. Even after the matter had been cleared up to the satisfaction of some critics, museums were reluctant to sacrifice valuable possessions and at most admit only uncertainty of producer.

It is interesting to follow the steps by which Van Dyke arrived at his conclusions, which have been adequately set forth in the work already mentioned. Regarding the sixty-four self-portraits, until recently attributed to Rembrandt, he says: "Why should Rembrandt paint himself so many times? Because he was poor and could not afford models? All artists are traditionally poor. . . . When you come to look over these portraits another extraordinary thing begins to develop and take on proportions. The sixty-four are all of the same sitter, the same model, seen at different ages. There is a difference in pose, in light, in color, in costume, in handling, but the sitter is identical in all of them. But no two look alike. . . . In the sixty-four likenesses (eliminating the factor of age) Rembrandt is fat-faced, thin-faced, round-faced, square-faced. His eyes are close together, wide apart; he is square-eyed, round-eyed, open-eyed, squint-eyed. His nose is bulbous, flat, straight, crooked; his mouth is large, small, turned up, turned down; his lips are thin-edged, coarse-edged, and not edged at all. He has the expression of a rich man, a poor man, a beggar man, a thief; he is wise-looking, foolish-looking, sad-looking, drunken-looking; he grins, he roars, he scowls, he weeps. And so on. The variety end only with the sixty-fourth portrait. No two of them are the same or even so much as repeat one another in non-essentials.

"Could any one looking into a mirror see himself or wish to see himself in such a variety of aspect? . . .

"The Rembrandt portraits should be explained by saying they are the product of pupils—different pupils working over a period of perhaps thirty years, working from a model that stayed on in the shop and grew old with the pupils that came and went. The portraits are for the larger part merely study-heads, given sometimes with a fancy cloak and cap introduced, but more often merely a study-head, done for practice in the portrait class. The poorer work was probably scraped out or lost in the shuffle of time, while the better heads were kept in the shop as show pieces, and were finally signed with Rembrandt's name and sold as part of the shop perquisites belonging to the master."[1]

Much the same is true of many another painting, heretofore considered to be a genuine Rembrandt. The painting of the *Dutch Girl of an Orphanage,* in the Chicago Art Institute, is believed by Van Dyke to be the work of an unknown pupil. The *Woman Paring Her Nails,* in the Metropolitan Museum, is now assigned to Maes. Backer, Bol, Flinck, and other of Rembrandt's students have latterly come in for their due share of credit, with the result that the number of works by the master has been materially diminished. Van Dyke maintains that an artist reveals his identity by his brush as surely as a penman by his hand writing. By a close study of style and brush work, the productions of each painter have been determined with a reasonable degree of certainty.

Leaving moot questions to critics, it is well for us to confine our study of Rembrandt to such paintings as are indisputably his. The three group pictures which are inseparably associated with him—the *Lesson in Anatomy* (otherwise known as *Doctor Tulp's Lecture* or *Students in Clinics*); *The Night Watch,* incorrectly so-called, since the painting was done in daylight; the *Syndics of the Cloth Hall*—these are certainly the work of Rembrandt. Also the portrait of Jan Six, in the Six Collection; the portrait of Saskia with her feathered hat, now in the Cassel gallery; another Saskia, on her husband's knee—a rollicking picture, more in the style of Frans Hals; the Frick self-portrait; the portrait of a *Jewish Rabbi,* in London; *The*

Jewish Bride; Saskia with the Red Flower; Rembrandt as an old man, and, among religious pictures, *The Supper at Emmaus*—these are all by the masterly hand of Rembrandt and could have been done by none other.

Certain innate qualities characterized Rembrandt throughout his life and molded his art. No untoward experience could deprive him of his poise or remove his equilibrium. "He was always serene, lofty, undisturbed by local happenings, as though he foresaw the future and could afford to rest quietly and smile. He had the Goethe-Leonardo mind and saw the world from mountain tops. In that far outlook there was no hint of restlessness, or hurry; no need for hysteria, pathos, or anguish."[2]

Rembrandt was at his best in portraiture. He was less successful with group work. In the *Lesson in Anatomy,* observation of the picture will disclose lack of organization in it. Doctor Tulp is lecturing to students or doctors in clinics, holding the hand of a body, placed before him for dissection. This was an absorbing period in the medical world. Clinics were by no means so frequent then as now. However, in order that he might obtain satisfactory portraits of the listeners, some appear to look away from the group as if uninterested in the vital matters under discussion. *The Night Watch* is more properly known as the *Sortie of the Banning-Cock Company.* It is difficult to judge of the picture today, for it has fared badly. In the first place, it was cut down to fit a different space from the one originally assigned to it, and at least two figures were sacrificed to this end. This naturally changes the center of the picture. Again, it was neglected for a long time and became dust covered. When discovered, in its blackened condition, it was assumed to be a night scene.

The artist desired to convey the impression of motion and his peculiar use of strong light and contrasting darkness, so successful in the instance of a single figure, is less happily employed in depicting groups.

In his late period, when the merchants were represented in their Cloth Hall, he had mastered the art of grouping. Here all five men look intently at a speaker who is outside the painting; every face is wonderfully portrayed.

Rembrandt was by no means the first painter to struggle with light and shadow. We have seen how greatly it absorbed certain of the Italian artists and how Correggio solved it to his satisfaction by having bright light emanate from an unexpected source, as, for instance, in the familiar *Holy Night* or *Nativity,* from the holy Child. Rembrandt brings it from a convenient window or an open door. *The Night Watch* proves conclusively that he was not always successful in manipulating it when more than one figure was involved.

Disappointed at every turn of fortune's wheel, forced by circumstances to realize how transitory are all things temporal, Rembrandt dwelt more and more with the realities that are unchanging. In the face of his Jewish Rabbi he conveys the idea of indomitable courage, born of an unfaltering and steadfast soul. In the common people around him, the poor and inconsequent, he saw fine qualities that wholly escaped the casual observer. To quote once more from the critic previously cited: "His sympathy is quite as broad, quite as far-reaching as his breadth of view. He is no mere mental machine that sees like a camera and records like a printing press. Everything is transformed, transfused, transmuted into something new and strange by passing through the alembic of his emotional personality. . . . And what a rare vision of beauty he thus enfolds! How closely the beautiful is associated with the capacity to feel! And how far removed it may be from mere regularity of form or feature! Not one of Rembrandt's types has more than a passing comeliness of form, and many of them were probably called ugly in the life, but how the painter's sympathy brought beauty into their faces! This is what is known in æsthetics as 'the beauty of the ugly'—something that was long deemed a paradox, but does not Rembrandt give it proof?"[3]

Rembrandt's pictures must be seen to be appreciated. It is doubtful if descriptions of any paintings are particularly helpful save to point out features that might escape the indifferent or inattentive. However, in the case of this richly endowed artist, words are impotent. He dwelt in an emotional world and created his pictures as a means of

emotional communication with his fellows. Language is the medium of the intellect; for the emotions we seek music or painting or sculpture.

His pupils seized upon his peculiar use of light and shadow and were often bungling in their application of it, as examination of their pictures will prove. Where they were weak in character interpretation, the master had been profound. Indeed, aside from monetary loss, it is passing strange that any should regret the fact that much inferior work has been removed from the list of paintings formerly accredited to Rembrandt. Not that he was always at his best; his undisputed productions disprove that. But he invariably set slight value upon mere appearances, looking beneath the surface and correctly interpreting the character of the sitter before him. Emotional experience crystalized in character was what he sought and he never confused this with beauty.

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1 Van Dyke: *Rembrandt and His School,* 14.
2 Ibid., 28.
3 Ibid., 29.
x *Rembrandt and His School,* John C. Van Dyke, Scribner, 1923.

THE DUTCH GENRE PICTURE

By W. Bode

THE genre picture has arisen on this side of the Alps; here only has it found a real home and a brilliant, many-sided development. Its growth is not in public life, but in family life; it can only expand freely where the latter is the basis of the life of the people. Only a free people can offer a field for its rise and progress, and that such exist is testified by the spirit of independence which is reflected in it. In The Netherlands and in Germany, at the beginning of modern painting, since the days of the brothers Van Eyck, we find delight in the genre: the religious representations were wanting in the grand monumental character of the Italian art of that time, their pronounced characteristics were of the nature of the genre. The scene of the story of the saints was laid in the home; the figures appear in the costume and with the features of the family. During the sixteenth century the regular genre picture begins to detach itself, mostly through the influence of Italian art, which the northern masters attempted to emulate in grandeur of style and elevation of expression. At first it is a description of the life of the people as seen in the streets and on the high-roads, in the markets and market-halls, street kitchens and houses of ill fame. The representatives of this tendency, at their head the great Pieter Brueghel, have little interest as yet in the individual, but rather in the great classes of the people as a whole, and above all in the lowest classes, whose life is lived openly and unrestrainedly, out of doors, in the streets and squares, and in the fields. They describe them in their various occupations, in their busy comings and goings; and what they give is an amusing picture-book with numerous little episodes rather than single completed actions.

After the separation of the Dutch Free States from the Spanish Netherlands the genre picture at once takes a

special and prominent position in the now independent Dutch art. While in the Spanish Netherlands (even in the seventeenth century) the genre picture scarcely gets beyond the first stage, the more typical picture of peasant life, scarcely to be imagined without Dutch stimulus, we see here, through about two generations, the genre picture develop from the purely pictorial presentment of soldiers and peasants to the novel of manners of the upper classes. It is cultivated so richly and variously and by such a number of individual and remarkable artists that even the nineteenth century can offer no parallel to it.

When we examine the subjects of the Dutch genre paintings, we find—in contrast to the Flemish genre picture and to what the Romantic schools offer instead of the real genre—a distinct development from the typical to the individual, from the rendering of the outer appearance to that of the inner life, and, in the last stage, the return to the delight in outward show and typical scenes.

It is characteristic of the first period of Dutch painting that the artists paid no attention to the individual, but strove to depict the life of whole classes of society. They chose the classes whose lives were lived in public, whose behaviour was under little restraint, and almost void of any consideration for others. They sought their subjects among the life of the people as the spectator saw it wherever he went: the comings and goings of the peasants and the poorest class of the population, in the village street or at the fair, in the peasant's cottage or in the ale-house. Along with these, the rollicking doings of the soldiery and their hangers-on, affording as they did gay and lively scenes, stimulated these artists to represent them pictorially. While Pieter Brueghel and his successors only render the doings of the country people generally and picturesquely, and mostly in connection with landscape, or with moralizing or even allegorical allusions, the Dutch genre painters, from the beginning of the seventeenth century, strive to pick out characteristic situations from the life of the peasants, and to present them in a finished manner and with a more pronounced and individual rendering of the scenes and even of the single types.

By the side of this we find, as a new appearance in art, the presentment of the soldiers' life; it developed at the same period, and quickly became popular throughout the whole of Holland. With the first wars of liberty, and as a consequence of them, the soldiers had come into the country, Spanish troops as well as mercenaries who had been enlisted against them by the northern provinces. They were stationed in the towns during the winter, and in the devastated country there were continual and terrible scenes of fighting and plundering. The unaccustomed and picturesque spectacle which this new life presented was bound to attract the artists; for after the terrible and destructive struggle of the first years had worn itself out, and had made way for intermittent, petty hostilities, people at last became used to this unpleasant state of things, and took heart to observe the doings of the soldiery. Thus a number of artists in Holland—in the same way and at the same time as in the Spanish Netherlands—represent skirmishes, bivouac scenes, as well as incidents from the lives of robbers and marauders. The background for these is always some part of the native landscape.

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With the rendering of the interior, in the pictures of the peasantry, came the feeling and interest for the inmates, as well as for the inside light, the chiaroscuro; and in the pictures of society there was developed the understanding for finished composition, pictorial effect, and delicate execution. Thus prepared, Dutch art advanced rapidly to the representation of the life of the different classes of citizens. In characterising the occupations of the single person the individual becomes more and more prominent. The art of Frans Hals was of remarkable importance in the development of the pictures of society, whereas, under Rembrandt's influence, the description of the lives of the citizens deepened into the intimate rendering of Dutch family life in all its homely simplicity and heartiness. The works of the great men of this school, who make use of Rembrandt's artistic means, especially of his chiaroscuro, represent at once the culminating point of artistic representation and the perfect development of the genre picture.

Dutch humour, from the very beginning, realised the comical and laughable side in the life of the peasants; and it was the same in the case of the lives of the citizens. The descriptions of these gradually, and especially through Jan Steen, get a satirical character; not to the advantage of art, which not infrequently verges on caricature, or becomes merely illustrative. The indiscretion with which intimate scenes of family life, when they have a comic feature, were now brought into notice, attracted the public more than delicate characteriaztion and artistic perfection. With the decline and demoralization of civic life the genre picture eventually deteriorated into the indecent rendering of equivocal scenes, for which, however, the hollow pathos of the time demanded the mantle of Biblical or mythological stories. Here, too, art dies out, in the cold, superficial painting of material by which the figures again become empty, conventional shapes.

This development, which, from its first beginnings till its termination, comprises about a century, was achieved by innumerable single, fine gradations, and produced a crowd of individual artists. The example and weight of the great masters, primarily of Hals and Rembrandt, determined indeed the different directions and influenced their growth, but the strong individuality of numerous important artists among them brought about the many-sidedness of Dutch genre painting.

3. "The Little Dutchmen"

The "little Dutchmen" have been so designated because of the subjects they elected to paint, abjuring all pretentious themes and confining themselves strictly to the little incidents of daily existence, the trivial acts and inconsequent matters that, after all, must monopolize the greater portion of our lives.

Contrast often serves the purpose of impressing facts indelibly upon the mind. So, before considering the home-loving Dutch and their art which has proclaimed this love everywhere, let us look back for a moment to a people who knew little of what we now understand by the term *domestic life*—to the ancient Greeks, who begrudged every moment which was not spent in association with their fellow men, whether in exercise, discussion of public affairs in the agora, or listening to philosophers propound their theories in groves or shady walks. A wellborn Greek considered his house as merely a place in which to sleep and eat when not fortunate enough to be invited elsewhere to dine. When his friends wished urgently to see Socrates, they hastened to his home at dawn, lest he should be already gone. The women's part was to care for the young children and administer the household; they were, generally speaking, uneducated and their conversation would not have interested a well informed Greek.

As a natural outgrowth of such conditions, the ancient Greeks expended little care upon their houses. On the other hand, public buildings, theatres, assembly places and above all, the temples of the gods, were of prime importance. Sculpture and painting, as well as architecture, were governed by the preponderant value set upon public as opposed to private concerns. After the age of Pericles, the discriminating were loud in their denunciation of the attention the wealthy were bestowing upon their dwellings, apparel and personal concerns generally. Such conduct bespoke the breaking down of the very foundations of Greek civilization.

In direct contrast to all this, we find the seventeenth century Dutch devoted to the home, the unit of society.

True, it was necessary for them to join together to reclaim land from the sea and protect areas already redeemed from its ravages. It had been highly essential that Dutchmen should band themselves together in order to shake off the hated rule of Spain and win freedom of worship after they had espoused Protestantism. Civic matters necessarily required some attention, but the heart was in the home. As a result, a nationalistic art developed in The Netherlands which was unconcerned with dramatic episodes in the progress of the human race. Painters did not strive to portray the creation of the world, like Michael Angelo, nor the grief of our erring parents when expelled from the Garden of Eden; nor yet again the suffering Prometheus or the sorrow of Andromache. No such mighty conflicts moved them to pictorial art. Rather, their art began in portraiture, expanded to include water and land scenes; and became to a great extent concerned with genre.

Frans Hals and Rembrandt had settled once and for all time that Dutch art should not be mere imitation of foreign painting. Both had excelled in portraiture and Hals had given some attention to domestic scenes, although his work was more suggestive of the tavern than the sober work-a-day world. Rembrandt, in his religious compositions, had represented the Dutch peasants and the simplicity of the Dutch home. His work as a whole was too subtle, too deeply significant for imitation. However, two aspects of it were adopted and expanded by those who felt his influence: the landscape and the scenes of Dutch life which he had included in his religious paintings.

We may be sure that for every genre painter now remembered, a score have been forgotten. Painters were numerous in The Netherlands and their pictures were a drug on the market. It wrings one's heart to find that the most gifted of them were reduced to poverty and compelled to accept public dole. Most of them suffered privations, worked for starvation prices and finally filled pauper's graves. However, it is not necessary to turn back to seventeenth century Holland to find a nation largely indifferent to the work of its artists. Some artists whom

the future may deem as great as these feel the pressure of poverty today.

It is possible for us to speak of only a few of these "little Dutchmen," but their lasting popularity is attested by watching spectators in galleries where their work is now exhibited. Jan Steen, Pieter de Hooch, Ter Borch, Nicholas Maes, and Vermeer of Delft are among the greatest, although the list might well be extended to include Dou and half a score beside.

Jan Steen (1626-1679) early fell under the influence of Frans Hals. It was the humor of Hals' pictures that appealed to him. His own life was sordid and harassed with pressing need; yet he continued to portray the little comedies of daily existence. His total output of paintings has been estimated anywhere from five to ten hundred. It is not strange, therefore, that complaint is often made of his hasty, careless work. He probably never painted a picture that was not worth much more than it brought him but it must be said that he did not hold himself to a high standard of production. It was no doubt difficult to do so when creditors were seizing one's personal belongings for trifling accounts.

He married Margrit van Goyen, whom he painted many times. She is the principal figure in his celebrated *Twelfth Night*. Some of his pictures have religious subjects, some mythological; however, they are all Dutch scenes. Imagination, often lacking among the genre painters, was apparent in Steen. Speaking of his wide variety of scenes, Bode says: "He has represented in the most diverse and varied ways all the small and great events of everyday life in Holland, just as he observed them with his keen eyes. He accompanies man from the cradle to the grave, and describes joys and sorrows in the houses of all classes with inexhaustible delight in characteristic situations. He shows us the peasant in the tavern, smoking, playing and drinking, dancing or at bowls. But it is the townsman of the lower and middle burgher classes whose doings interest him most. He takes us into the street or to the market; a wedding procession passes us by; he shows us a fair, a noisy troop of street-boys accompanying the prize bull; the

throng before the tavern, where travellers are arriving and intoxicated guests trying to find their way home; the return from market, an out-of-doors picnic, a cats' concert by moonlight, performed by maskers before the house of the fair one; gypsies telling fortunes, a poultry-yard where the little girl is feeding the fowls, and many similar motives. . . . There is no Dutch national fête which he has not immortalized in pictures, just as he would have unwillingly missed being among the guests. . . . In almost innumerable pictures Jan Steen has represented love scenes of all kinds and from all ranks, where the actors are of all ages. . . . The doings of the children at school, at play, in the nursery, and in the company of their parents and grown-ups, are the subject of numerous pictures in which his delicate, good-hearted manner, his love and his understanding of the child's heart, is mostly far more apparent than his enjoyment of fun or mockery."[1]

Pieter de Hooch (1629-1698) was born in Rotterdam, but he removed to Delft, where he became a member of the Painters' Guild. Vermeer was at work in Delft at this time and the two became friends. The two aspects of painting that appealed to him were design and the use of light. Undoubtedly he was strongly influenced by Rembrandt, but his employment of light was wholly different. Figures were incidental, included to further his designs, rather than for the purpose of portraiture. He was fond of taking a geometrical design and making it the basis of his composition. It will often be found that the square or the triangle lie at the base of his designs. Sunlight diffused is the real subject of his paintings rather than their accidental names. None other used it in precisely the same way. Like many other artists he died in want.

Ter Borch (1617-1681) was one of the earliest producers of this group; he was also the most refined and was endowed with faultless taste. His father, likewise a painter, gave him early instruction. When fifteen, the lad was sent to Amsterdam; two years later, he went to Haarlem. Afterwards Ter Borch travelled extensively, coming under the influence of Van Dyck in England, of Velasquez in Spain, while in Italy he studied the work of Italian masters.

He painted the Dutch aristocracy, the substantial people who dwelt in well appointed homes. No one else has ever approached him in representing fine satin on canvas. Its shimmering texture beggars description.

Ter Borch is a notable exception to the long line of painters whose lives were hampered by penury. He waited upon the wealthy, ever ready to be perpetuated in portraits. When the representatives of European nations assembled in Münster in 1646-8, he was shrewd enough to be there and obtained numerous commissions. He was qualified to render his subjects with delicacy and refinement and had not missed the message of Van Dyck.

Nicholas Maes (1632-1693) is remembered as a pupil of Rembrandt who caught the spirit of the master and most nearly approached him in manner. He could not do the great things that his teacher achieved, but he was fairly successful with the lesser. We have already noted that the painting now in possession of the Metropolitan Museum—*Woman Paring Her Nails*—while long attributed to Rembrandt is now accepted by John van Dyke as the creation of Maes.

His earlier work is much more satisfying than that done after he came under the influence of Rubens and Van Dyck.

When Vermeer was twenty-one years of age, he was already an accomplished and established painter. He probably studied with Rembrandt, but while deeply absorbed in light, he made a far different use of it. Macfall claims that the "musical employment of light and shade by Vermeer has no rival in the whole realm of art."

He married early and was the father of ten children. He died in his forties, worn out by his struggle with poverty. Thirty paintings are now attributed to him, his *View of Delft* being most often copied.

Like Pieter de Hooch, he was less interested in figures. It has been said that he found as much satisfaction in painting a jug as in portraying a lady. Abstract design and the possibilities of color continually absorbed him. In the use of color he was peculiarly sensitive.

"He painted those large openly spaced rooms in which he sets his figures, generally a single figure, against a light wall space that broadly sweeps towards the picture's edge into luminous shadow, the room and figure flooded in the limpid atmosphere, and the room near as empty as the sunlit air. . . . He painted in these days his famous landscape, one of the purest landscapes in all Dutch art, the unforgettable *View of Delft* at the Hague—he painted but three recorded landscapes: one has vanished, the other is *A House at Delft* in the Six house at Amsterdam. . . .

"He realizes decorative effect with the colours and forms of musical instruments or floor-patterns or tablecloths or pictures in frames or the like, employed with consummate tact rather to increase the largeness of his effects than from fear of the emptiness of his rooms; and with what astonishing skill these things are severally employed to enhance the scheme and make it attune to the mood of the central figure! How the masterly simplicity of the large background wall compels the intention! For, high above the supreme craftsmanship, the unerring command of light, the rhythmic use of colour, in which Vermeer stands out as one of the most perfect painters of his race and age, he looms as one of the *artists* of the first rank in that he uttered the emotion created by the impression before him with that mystic power that is granted only to genius. . . . The room is not only held by light and shadows and beings and objects, but the serene mood of the human being who struts the little moment on the stage."[2]

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[1] Bode: *Great Masters of Dutch and Flemish Painting*, 99.
[2] Macfall: *History of Painting*, V, 173.

4. Landscape Painters

I

It was natural that the home-loving Dutch should have taken much pleasure in pictures that represent their beloved country, and scenes of land and sea were profusely depicted by their artists. The use of landscape as a background for figures had been made by Leonardo and his followers and by the Umbrian painters; Italian artists continually employed it in this way.

Among the Flemish painters, Pieter Brueghel and men of his day began to study natural scenery and the endless variations it presents under changing lights and seasons. We have already spoken of his winter scenes.

Holland, with its sand dunes, modulated by every wind; its low-lying lands, its sluggish rivers, its dykes and picturesque people in their native costumes afforded rich opportunity for the penetrating eye of the artist, sensitive to color and to shadows cast by drifting clouds. Just as we have found the genre painters intent upon the representation of light, so those engaged with the great out-of-doors found the diffusion of sunlight a fascinating study.

Simply for the convenience of the classification, someone has divided Dutch landscapes into those "inhabited" and those given over to natural scenery alone. Like all classifications, this is somewhat arbitrary but it enables us to consider the landscapists in two accommodating groups. We shall consider briefly four Dutchmen of the first group—Cuyp, Potter, Ostade and Adrian van de Velde. Although these are representative, others might claim our attention with equal justice.

Aelbert Cuyp (1620-1691) was not a landscapist only, he had command of a wide range of painting. His father, Jacob Cuyp, and his grandfather were painters before him. He presents a gratifying exception to the majority of Dutch artists, since he was well-to-do in his own right and had the forethought to better his estate by marrying a wealthy widow.

Cuyp was born in Dordrecht, where he spent much of his life. That he was held in good esteem by his townspeople is attested by the fact that he held successive positions of public trust. He painted along the slow-flowing Maas, sometimes including the cattle that pastured along its banks. Many times he painted his native town, with its tower dominating the landscape.

He left some five or six hundred landscapes, some excellent, some indifferent. It is easy to follow his development in his work. Unfortunately for the general student, his best achievements are preserved today in private galleries.

Cuyp's marriage brought him into touch with the many prosperous relatives of his wife, and he was commissioned to paint portraits of a considerable number, not inoften on horseback. It is not in such work as this that he is seen to advantage. However, he left some fifty landscapes which are classed as masterpieces, worthy to find a place by the productions of Claude Lorrain.

"Cuyp, like all the great masters of Dutch art, is a painter of light. Each one in his way glorifies the sunlight, whose power ever and again rejoices the heart of man, and makes everything appear in particular splendour and of bewitching charm. But with none of them does sunlight play the part it does with Cuyp. With Rembrandt, with Vermeer, and all the others, part of the picture is clearly lighted, but the principal charm lies in the contrast of light and dark and in the brightening of the shadows. With Cuyp everything is bathed in sunlight, and the whole landscape is steeped in a luminous atmosphere which surrounds it and penetrates it. . . . His pictures give us the impression of the infinite atmosphere, from which a wealth of warm light streams out over the whole landscape. . . . When Cuyp paints the early morning, which he particularly likes to do, the sky is filled with a delicate cool mist, and in the evening it is enveloped in a warm, vaporous veil; but at broad day fleecy clouds are formed from the watery mist lying over the landscape and gather in front into light grey masses. Over the cattle quenching their thirst at the water, or over the boats which take their sluggish way across the sun-lit surface of the river, these

clouds form a great, full mass of vigorous and yet transparent shadow which completes the great construction of the picture and makes the shimmering landscape appear all the more hazy and golden, while, at the same time, the sunny splendour lends to his figures a peculiar dignity and consecration."[1]

Paul Potter (1625-1654), died in his twenty-eighth year, thus he was gone before men ordinarily come into their own. He was an accomplished painter at the early age of fifteen. Most of his active period was spent in the Dutch centers of Amsterdam, Delft and The Hague. His father was his teacher. The family was descended from the noble house of Egmont.

The Hague possesses Potter's famous *Young Bull,* of which Ruskin drily remarked that it was in danger of falling from its frame. Another almost equally well known work by this painter is *Dirk Tulp on Horseback.*

Heretofore Potter's productions have been somewhat overrated; today it is customary to speak disparagingly of them. They certainly lack the atmosphere and sensitive feeling that many of his countrymen exhibited. He loved to paint cattle in the pasture or along the stream and his art is of the bucolic pastoral. Macfall calls him the "balladmonger of the pastures."

Isaac van Ostade (1621-1649) was born in Haarlem. His older brother Adrian was his teacher and he had been developed under the robust art of Franz Hals. Adrian afterwards fell under the influence of Rembrandt and much of his painting is concerned with the interiors of peasant homes. Isaac followed his example at first, but presently went his own way and painted in the open, using animals and human figures in his compositions. Like Potter, he died very young, yet he was so industrious that his accomplishment was considerable.

Adrian van de Velde (1635-1672) belonged to a family that produced six painters. His father, William van de Velde the Elder (1611-1693), like his son and namesake, William the Younger (1633-1707), was a painter of the sea. Adrian (1635-1672), a younger son, preferred to represent animals and landscapes.

"This Adrian was to make the name of Van de Velde famous, and was to reach to high place in the genius of Dutch landscape and animal painting. . . . To him were granted but some seventeen years of working-life, but he wrought therein an art that makes his name immortal. His sense of balanced composition, his fine handling of the figure, and of the cattle and flocks and herds of his land, his solid colour, his quick-telling touch, were not granted to him in vain; for they were but the exquisite hand's skill to render the tender moods of the rivers and low lands of the country which aroused in his subtle senses a poetic and delightful harmony of forms and colours that are the soul of his blithe art. The sea that called his kin does not seem to have drawn him. He was sent to complete the great sequence of the balladry of the level lands and peaceful pastoral that Cuyp and Potter wrought to achieve; and he brought to his destiny a tender and sweet reverie and a lyric blithe note that was uttered with subtle skill of handling, so that the limpid air was fixed upon his canvases, the tender sunlight surrendered to him, and field and tree, castle and human being, water and hamlet, are flecked with gem-like light and melt into the allure of his luminous atmosphere."[2]

[1] Bode: *Great Masters of Dutch Painting.*
[2] Macfall: *History of Painting,* V, 224.

II

When it comes to pure landscape, it would be difficult to mention other Dutchmen of their day worthy to stand with Ruysdael and Hobbema.

Jacob van Ruysdael was born in Haarlem, probably in 1628. He was about thirty years of age when he went to Amsterdam, where he lived until the close of his life, when a fatal malady impelled him to return to a hospital in Haarlem. Little is actually known regarding his personal affairs, but it is plain that he had a bitter experience, that poverty pressed heavily upon him and that such solace as he knew was found in communion with nature. Those who would know him must, therefore, lend themselves to a

sympathetic understanding of his landscapes. Such figures as his canvases contain were almost invariably set therein by friends, for he felt ill at ease when he strayed from representing the great out-of-doors.

Ruysdael did not seek the placid and peaceful in nature. Rather, he sought wild, wind-swept spots, leading some to conclude that he traveled along the Scandinavian coast. Restraint and reserve characterize all that he did and indicate his desire to become impersonal.

Bode says: "His landscapes are more varied than those of any other painter. . . . In the majority of his pictures we see gently undulating country with clumps of bushes or groups of trees, or the artist takes us into the interior of the wood where primæval, gigantic trees stand by still water, or he shows us the grand spectacle of a torrent breaking out of the thick forest and foaming and dashing over the rocks in the foreground, while high mountains are seen above the tops of the trees. . . . We stroll with him on the beach where we meet pedestrians and fishermen, and look out over the gently moving water and at the coloured sails of the boats, or we put out with him on to the stormy open sea, over which sudden gusts of wind with heavy rain pass."[1]

Careful study of Ruysdael's landscapes proves that his composition was always worked out to the last detail and everything made subservient to his dominating purpose. Nothing was left to chance or sudden inspiration. He was painstaking throughout. In painting the manifestations of nature, he lost himself and became for the time oblivious of the untoward conditions which were finally too great for him. In the end, he filled a pauper's grave.

The same unfortunate fate is recorded of Hobbema, although we are forced to feel that he never allowed the ups and downs of daily existence to weigh too heavily upon him. He was born in Amsterdam, probably in 1638, and lived a comparatively long life, dying in 1709. Whether or not he studied painting before he knew Ruysdael is uncertain but likely. He married and happened to obtain a permanent position in the employ of a municipality in the

wine-customs. While scarcely sufficient to live on, its regular income apparently deterred him from putting forth great effort with his art.

Hobbema repeated himself and several of his water-mills are scattered throughout the length and breadth of the world's art galleries. His famous *Avenue of Poplars* (The Avenue, Middleharnais) is unforgettable because of its unusual design.

Holland is known by the landscapes and seascapes of her artists, but, generally speaking, she has been singularly inattentive to these gifted painters during their lives. The price paid today for a Hobbema or a Ruysdael would have provided comfortably for both men during their earthly sojourn. As it was, they fill unknown graves and collectors and art dealers reap the harvest of their finest endeavor.

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[1] Bode: *Dutch Painters,* 154.

RUYSDAEL

OF all the Dutch painters, Ruysdael is the one who most nobly resembles his country. He has its breadth, its sadness, its rather dreary placidity, and its monotonous and tranquil charm.

With vanishing lines, a severe palette, in two grand traits expressly belonging to its physiognomy,—gray and limitless horizons, and a gray heaven by which the infinite is measured,—he has left us of Holland a portrait which I will not call familiar, but intimate, lovable, admirably faithful, which never grows old. By still other claims Ruysdael is, as I fully believe, the most distinguished figure in the school after Rembrandt, and this is no small glory for a painter who has painted only so-called inanimate landscapes, and not one living being, at least without the aid of some one.

Remember that, taking him in detail, Ruysdael would perhaps be inferior to many of his compatriots. In the first place he is not adroit at a moment and in a style where address was the current money of talent; and perhaps it was owing to this lack of dexterity that he owes the character and the ordinary weight of his thought. Neither is he precisely skilful. He paints well, and affects no singularity in his craft. What he wants to say he says clearly with truth, but as if slowly, without hidden meaning, vivacity or archness. His drawing has not certainly the incisive, sharp character, and the accentric accent belonging to certain pictures by Hobbema. . . .

Ruysdael felt things differently, and fixed once for all a very different principle, both audacious and truthful. He considered the immense vault which arches over the country or the sea as the real, compact, and dense ceiling of his pictures. He curves it, unfolds it, measures it, determines its value by its relation to the accidents of light sown in the terrestrial horizon; he shades its great surfaces, models them, and executes them, in a word, as a work

of the greatest interest. He discovers lines in it which continue those of the subject, arranges the masses of color in it, makes the light descend from it, and only puts it there in case of necessity.

His great eye, well opened to observe everything living,—that eye accustomed to the height of objects as well as their extent,—travels constantly from the soil to the zenith, never looks upon an object without observing the corresponding point in the atmosphere, and thus, omitting nothing, makes the circuit of the round field of vision. Far from losing himself in analysis, he constantly employs synthesis and makes abstracts. What nature disseminates, he concentrates into a total of lines, colors, values, and effects. He frames all that in his thought, as he means it to be framed in the four angles of his canvas. His eye has the properties of a camera-obscura; it reduces, diminishes the light, and preserves things in the exact proportion of their forms and colors. A picture by Ruysdael, whatever it may be,—the finest are, of course, the most significant,—is an entire painting, full and strong, in its principle grayish above, brown or greenish below, which rests solidly with its four corners upon the shining flutings of the frame; it seems dark at a distance, but is penetrated with light when approached; it is beautiful in itself, with no vacancy, with few digressions, like a lofty and sustained thought which has for language a tongue of the most powerful kind.

I have heard it said that nothing was more difficult to copy than a picture by Ruysdael, and I believe it,—just as nothing is more difficult to imitate than the manner of expression of the great writers of our seventeenth century in France. Here we have the same turns, the same styles, something of the same spirit, I had almost said the same genius. I do not know why I imagine that if Ruysdael had not been a Hollander and a Protestant, he would have been a Port-Royalist.

You will notice at the Hague and Amsterdam two landscapes which are the repetition of the same subject, one large, the other small. Is the little canvas the study which served for a text for the larger one? Did Ruysdael draw or paint from nature? Was he inspired, or did he copy

directly? That is his secret, as it is of most of the Dutch masters, except perhaps Van de Velde, who certainly painted out of doors, excelled in direct studies, and in the studio lost much of his skill, whatever people may say. But it is certain that these two works are charming, and demonstrate what I have been saying about Ruysdael's habits. It is a view taken at some distance from Amsterdam, with the little city of Haarlem, dark and bluish, visible through the trees, under the vast rolling waves of a cloudy sky, in the rainy dimness of a low horizon; in front, for the foreground, is a laundry with red roofs, and the bleaching linen spread out flat over the fields. Nothing could be simpler or poorer than this point of departure, but nothing either could be more true. This canvas, one foot eight inches high, ought to be seen to learn, from a master who never feared to degrade himself because he was not a man to stoop, how a subject can be elevated when a man is himself a lofty spirit,—to learn that there is nothing ugly for an eye which sees beauty, no littleness for a great sensitiveness,—to learn, in a word, what the art of painting becomes when practised by a noble mind.

The *River View,* in the Van der Hoop Museum, is the highest expression of this haughty and magnificent manner. This picture would be better named *The Windmill,* and under this title no one would be able to treat without disadvantage a subject which in the hands of Ruysdael has found its incomparable typical expression.

Briefly, this is the rendering. A part of the Meuse probably; on the right, terraced ground with trees and houses, and on the summit the black mill with wide-spread arms, rising high on the canvas; a palisade against which the water of the river softly undulates,—a sluggish water, soft and admirable; a little corner of a vague horizon, very slight and very firm, very pale and very distinct, on which rises the white sail of a boat,—a flat sail with no wind in its canvas, of a soft and perfectly exquisite value. Above it a wide sky loaded with clouds, with openings of pale blue, gray clouds scaling to the top of the canvas,—no light, so to speak, anywhere in this powerful tone, composed of dark browns and dark-slate colors, but a single gleam in

the middle of the picture, which comes from the far distance, like a smile, to illumine the disk of a cloud. It is a great square picture, *grave* (we need not fear to make too great a use of this word with Ruysdael), of extreme sonorousness in the lowest register, and, as my notes add, *marvellous in the gold.* In fact, I describe it and insist upon it only to arrive at this conclusion,—beyond the value of the details, the beauty of form, the grandeur of expression, the intimate nature of its sentiment, it is a task singularly impressive to consider it as a simple decoration.

All Ruysdael is here,—his noble way of working, little charm, except by chance, a great attractiveness, an inwardness which is revealed little by little, accomplished science, very simple means. Imagine him in conformity with his painting, try to represent him to yourself beside his picture, and if I am not mistaken you will have the double and very harmonious image of an austere dreamer, of warm heart, and laconic and taciturn spirit.

I have read somewhere, so evident is it that a poet reveals himself through all the restraints of form and in spite of the conciseness of his language, that his work had the character of an elegiac poem in an infinity of songs. This is much to say when we think how little relation literature bears to this art, in which technicalities have so much importance, and where matter has such weight and value.

Elegiac or not, but surely a poet, if Ruysdael had written instead of painted, I think he would have written in prose instead of verse. Verse admits of too much fancy and stratagem, prose compels too great sincerity, for this clear mind not to have preferred its language to the other. As to the depths of his nature, he was a dreamer,—one of those men of whom there are many in our time, though they were rare at the epoch in which Ruysdael was born,—one of those *solitary ramblers* who fly from towns, frequent the suburbs, sincerely love the country, feel it without emphasis, relate it without phrasing, who are made restless by far-off horizons, charmed by level expanses, affected by a shadow, and enchanted by a gleam of sunshine.

We imagine Ruysdael neither very young nor very old; we do not see that he had a period of youth, nor do we

feel in him the enfeebling weight of advancing years. If we did not know that he died before the age of fifty-two years, we should imagine him between two ages, as a mature man or one of precocious maturity, very serious, master of himself early, with sad memories, regrets and the reveries of a mind which looks back, whose youth has not known the overwhelming unrest of hope. I believe he had no heart to cry, "Rise! longed-for storms!" His melancholy, of which he is full, has something manly and reasonable, in which appears neither the tumultuous childishness of early years nor the nervous tearfulness of later ones; it only tinges his painting with a sombre hue, as it would have tinged the thought of a Jansenist.

What has life done for him that he should have for it a sentiment so bitter and disdainful? What have men done to him that he should retire into deep solitude, and so avoid meeting them, even in his painting? Nothing or almost nothing is known of his existence except that he was born about 1630, that he died in 1681; that he was the friend of Berghem; that he had Solomon Ruysdael for an elder brother, and probably for his first adviser. As to his journeys, they are supposed and they are doubted; his cascades, mountain regions well wooded, with rocky declivities, would lead one to believe either that he must have studied in Germany, Switzerland, or Norway, or that he utilized the studies of Everdingen*, and was inspired by them. His great labor did not enrich him, and his title of burgher of Haarlem did not prevent him, it appears, from being almost forgotten.

Of this we should have a truly harrowing proof, if it is true that, in commiseration of his distress, more than from respect to his genius, which was hardly suspected by any one, they were obliged to admit him to the hospital at Haarlem, his native town, and that there he died. But before reaching this point what happened to him? Had he joys as he certainly had bitterness? Did his destiny give him an opportunity to love anything but clouds; and from what did he suffer most, if he did suffer,—from the torment of painting well or of living? All these questions remain without answer, and yet posterity would be glad to know.

Would you ever think of asking as much about Berghem, Karel Dujardin, Wouwerman, Goyen, Terburg, Metzu, Pieter de Hoogh himself? All these brilliant or charming painters painted, and it seems as if that was enough. Ruysdael painted; but he lived, and this is why it would be of so much importance to know how he lived. In the Dutch School I know but three or four men whose personality is thus interesting—Rembrandt, Ruysdael, Paul Potter, perhaps Cuyp,—and this is already more than is necessary to class them.

* A fine painter of Norwegian scenery. Alkmaar, 1621-1675.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN LANDSCAPE

From a Lecture by W. J. James

IT does not appear that the Greeks, with all their love of the beautiful, ever looked upon landscape as what we may call a pictorial thing. On the other hand they were acute observers, and their unerring directness presents us in literature with many an example of intense appreciation of the beauties and the sentiment of landscape, which we in these days attempt with varying success to translate into pictures.

It is probable that amongst that great people the Chinese, the representation of landscape for its own sake was first exploited as a means of artistic expression. It is scarcely surprising that between the climax of Greek art and the beginning of the Christian era there should have been no further development; for a thousand years or more we have a period of almost unbroken silence as to artistic innovation or discovery. Such efforts after beauty as there may have been resulted in nothing more than a certain barbaric splendour. The influence, too, of the Church, which later became so effective in the encouragement of the Arts, was either hostile or indifferent. Not till the painter's art had developed a high perfection, as it did during the Renaissance and succeeding periods, do we find the first beginnings of a serious study of landscape ever as an accessory to figure pictures. There are, of course, in many early pictures, landscape backgrounds of great beauty and charm, beauty derived from admirable spacing and arrangement of masses, and charm due principally to their naïveté and child-like simplicity and not to an understanding comparable with that exhibited by the artists (such for example as Paolo Uccello, Filippino Lippi, and Piero di Cosimo) in their treatment of figures and draperies.

It is when we come to the Venetians that we begin to find a more highly developed perception of the possibilities

of landscape. Even in some of the earlier pictures of this school the landscape has become an integral part of the construction of the picture, the figures move, or are placed, in the different planes and become, as in Bellini's beautiful *Death of St. Peter Martyr,* in our National Gallery, a part of the landscape instead of this being a mere subsidiary background. Although such a landscape as this is still in many respects conventional it bears evidence of direct study and a knowledge of the simpler effects of the open air. Few things are more beautiful than Bellini's backgrounds of mountains with little hill towns perched upon them, and placid blue skies in which float a few white clouds of cumulus form.

In Giorgione and Titian we find a further development. The landscapes, indeed, in the Louvre's *Concert* (which if it be not by Giorgione is by an artist equally great) and in our own *Bacchus and Ariadne,* have in their way never been equalled, still less surpassed, and are in both these works of dominating importance. These remain, indeed, the greatest examples of figures in landscape ever produced. Such pictures first showed the possibility of landscape alone forming a suitable subject for the study of the artist. In the *Bacchus and Ariadne* there are marvellous passages of direct study from nature, for instance, the spray of vine-leaves and the flowers in the foreground, touched with astonishing precision and finish and yet so perfectly subordinated that every detail in the picture falls into its place and none is over-prominent or superfluous. Both Velasquez and Rubens, who had been under Venetian influence, painted pure landscape sometimes; and the latter was one of the first to attempt the representation of sunlight, and even of the sun itself, but at the same time there remains a good deal of the convention of the studio. The impulse given by the Venetians was received later by Claude, Gaspar Poussin, and Salvator Rosa, and though in the seventeenth century—and after—the art of landscape painting was still to a great extent conventional, it may be said in that period to obtain full recognition as a definite and a dignified branch of the painter's art.

In the same century, however, another phase was developing in Holland, which was to exercise a vast and abiding influence on the subsequent history of painting, in landscape as well as other branches. No phenomenon in the history of art is more remarkable than the sudden outburst of artistic production in seventeenth-century Holland, where a numerous, varied and extraordinarily competent school of painters flourished within the space of a hundred years. For the purpose of this lecture it must suffice to name only three names, and these shall be Rembrandt, Hobbema, and Vermeer of Delft. Compared to his painted work in figure and portrait the landscapes of Rembrandt are but few in number, but one of them, *The Mill,* must rank amongst the greatest realistic landscapes in the world. . . .

The landscape of Hobbema reaches its culminating point in the beautiful *Avenue of Middleharnais,* in the National Gallery. The picture is frankly realistic and carried as far towards the full representation of nature as the wisely limited palette will allow; although the colour scheme is confined to a range of blue-grey, grey-green, and brown, the warm and cool tones are managed with such art that the effect is more real than that of many pictures in which every resource of brilliant pigment has been employed. The composition is made by the sky which skilfully binds up the lines of the trees, land and buildings which would otherwise be too scattered and therefore distracting.

The greatest landscape, however, of this great time is the beautiful *View of Delft,* by Vermeer, at The Hague. This, too, is a realistic picture, but in a full scale of colour, red houses, blue sky with white clouds, a note of black most skilfully introduced, the whole of that degree of accomplishment always found in the too rare works of this most choice painter.

The eighteenth century, an age of stilted conventionality and artificiality, was not on the whole favourable to the development of landscape painting. Nevertheless, remarkable work was done by our own Gainsborough and Wilson. Neither of these men can be said to have broken definitely with convention, but Gainsborough in his later

manner suggests so much of the freshness of the open air, and in his landscape drawings, full of skill and charm, which seem to be mostly projects for pictures, and in Wilson we find such atmospheric qualities that we are more or less prepared for what is soon to come. We have, too, the beginnings of what was to become one of the glories of English art, the painting of landscape in water-colour, in Paul Danby. It is a singular fact that although the French Revolution was in its ideals a rebellion against established conventions, yet the art inspired and fostered by it was of the most severely classical type, and it is in England, which during the last years of the eighteenth and the first of the nineteenth centuries was engaged in a bitter conflict with the Revolution, that we find the true beginnings of the new ideas which have so profoundly affected art during the last hundred years. Between 1768 and 1784 the following seven English landscape painters were born: Crome, Turner, Girtin, Constable, Cotman, Cox, and De Wint. Delacroix, acknowledged leader and inspirer of the French "Romantic" school, was only born in 1798, Corot was born two years earlier, but his influence came much later than that of Delacroix; Decamps, Rousseau, Millet, and Diaz were born in the nineteenth century. . . .

The art history of France in the first half of the nineteenth century is that of the battle between the "Classical" and "Romantic" schools, the former led by the great Ingres, and the latter by Delacroix. The severe ideals of the classical school had themselves in their time been the result of a revolt from the extremely clever and brilliant, though sometimes tawdry and frivolous art of the period preceding the Revolution; it was now their turn to be attacked. We may assume that in every artistic movement there is an element of good which will remain after the pendulum has swung away, as it always does. The severity and discipline of classicism contributed something which we need not altogether condemn because in these days we happen to sympathize more with freedom in thought and expression. At the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars, France was in a condition of exhaustion and war-weariness comparable to that which today affects the

entire civilized world. Under such circumstances there is (or should be) a tendency for all men to turn to culture and to art for rest and refreshment; and the artist himself above all may be expected to turn (or return) to nature with renewed zest. It has often been the case that notable artistic production has taken place in countries more or less exhausted by wars and tumults; it has certainly done so in France after 1815 and again after 1870. . . .

Now let us return to England and see what were the developments taking place after the times of Constable and Turner. They are by no means along the lines which might have been expected. This was due, more than to any other cause, to the rise of the Pre-Raphaelites Brotherhood and to the impassioned advocacy of their theories and practice by John Ruskin. The critical writings of this master of English and profound thinker were devoted in the first instance to proclaiming the greatness of Turner, and in the second to the formulation of theories according to which the principles of the "P.-R. B." were shown to accord with those to which Ruskin attributed the pre-eminence of Turner. People will always differ as to the extent to which they may agree or disagree with Ruskin's arguments and conclusions; there can never be any doubt either as to the consummate skill with which they are presented, or as to the effects of Ruskin's writings in making ordinary people take more interest in, and care for, artistic matters than has ever been the case before or since. Apart from this, whenever art is in danger of becoming artificial and conventional there will always be a movement back to the direct study of nature, and in the direction of genuineness and simplicity of expression. Now Ruskin was by no means the originator, only the powerful advocate, of Pre-Raphaelism, his support was invaluable to its exponents in their struggle, a severe one, against academic and other prejudices, a battle comparable in some ways to that between Classicalists and Romanticists in France. Not least in landscape was the effect of Pre-Raphaelism far-reaching although not many pictures by the members of the "brotherhood" can be classed strictly as landscapes. . . .

The subject of decoration brings Whistler's name into one's mind, and we must speak at some length of his contribution to the development of landscape art, which is an important one. Although in everything he did Whistler always kept the decorative idea to the fore, yet he did more than this, he added the wonderful series of "nocturnes" and twilight pictures to the sum of artistic experience. The beautiful effects which one sees at twilight must often have been admired by artists before Whistler, but he was the first to discover how to paint them and so, incidentally, to teach people to see them for themselves. His wonderfully subtle tones of blue and grey were obtained with thin films of liquid pigment superimposed on a ground very carefully chosen as to colour and texture. Unfortunately some of these pictures are now deteriorated; the thin colour becoming more transparent with age has allowed what is beneath to become too visible. There are others which seem to be lasting well and all have the charm of arrangement and design, showing a Japanese influence, so conspicuous in Whistler's work. They are admirable examples of what can be done by a well-trained memory, for obviously such pictures cannot be painted direct from nature. . . .

Enough has been said already about painting in the nineteenth century to indicate that it was a period marked by experiment, and by evolution at times approaching revolution, especially in the study and analysis of colour and light, the ground of course having been comparatively well cleared as to problems of composition and arrangement. It is characteristic of all revolutionary movements that however good and necessary they may be in themselves they lead in some direction or another to excess, and revolutions in art are no exception to the rule. Because we find that increased freedom of expression is accompanied by extravagances there is no reason for condemning it without further ado instead of endeavoring to find the good side of it. . . .

The painting and delineating of landscapes is the youngest branch of the graphic arts, and therefore the one in which there probably remain the most fields to be ex-

plored, though by merely following our noses we are not likely to stumble over some hitherto undiscovered secret. We have to be uncommonly well equipped for the voyage. . . . It is impossible, for instance, without a real knowledge of form to express the space and sense of distance upon which so often the beauty of a landscape depends, nor without knowledge of the forms can we render properly the effect of the light which falls upon them or construct a picture in depth in such a way that the spectator feels as if he could walk into it and about in it. Above all, the landscape painter must study the sky, as Turner did, for it is the key-note to every landscape; its colour will and must dominate that of the whole picture, of which every part must always be reflecting something from the sky. All forms both in sky and land should be studied, not only in their aspect from one point of view, but also in their anatomy. For the forms in the sky the painter will have to depend largely upon his memory, and upon the importance of developing this faculty emphasis has already been laid. When the student has acquired these things he possesses some of the grammar; it still remains to be seen how he will use it. It will not do him much good unless he has cultivated a love of the beautiful, and of that harmony between the beautiful and the true which is the life-blood of art.

DUTCH STILL-LIFE

By Bode

THE true home of this art is in the Netherlands; the few contemporary painters in Italy and Spain, whose work showed the same tendency, are all followers of the Dutch masters and more or less dependent upon them. In Holland as well as in the Spanish Netherlands this peculiar branch of art flourished during the whole of the seventeenth and nearly to the middle of the eighteenth century. Hardly another province of painting can produce a like number of artists. . . .

Delight in the artistic presentment of inanimate Nature has its origin in the pleasure the people of the Netherlands took in representing everything pictorially which the visible world offers. Dutch horticulture and the fondness of the people for flowers, which has almost become a proverb, is another indication of their interest in still-life. The display upon the tables of the military guilds, and on the sideboards of the state-rooms, which the pictures of a B. van Bassen and D. van Delen bring before us, testify to their love for magnificent vessels of gold and silver, copper and pewter. The collections of curiosities and art appeared in the Netherlands, where we meet them, at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

The great number of artists who, in the most diverse parts of Holland, devoted themselves to the presentment of still-life, corresponds to the great variety and astonishing many-sidedness of this branch of art. Still-life in Holland—under this term we include, in the widest sense of the word, flower-painting and the delineation of dead animals—comes into existence with the severance of Dutch art from the old Netherland art. In the first epoch of its development, which together with its branches extends to about the middle of the seventeenth century, the local currents manifest themselves particularly strongly and are

indeed characteristic of these periods. From the motives of the works of this time we can generally say with some certainty whether this or that still-life has been painted by a Haarlem or a Leyden master, by one from Amsterdam or from The Hague; or, if we cannot do this, we can tell whether it was executed while the artist was living at one of these places. This variety in motive, and partly too in conception and treatment, permits us to draw interesting conclusions about the character of these towns, which, although only covering an area of a few miles, appear peculiarly shut off from one another in the first decades of the century. The painters of the rich old patrician town of Haarlem delight by the remembrance of the pleasures of the table. Sometimes they represent the luxurious table of the rich with the most beautiful silver cups and Venetian glass, sometimes the frugal meal of the poor whose appetite is certainly no less stimulated by the sight of a can of beer, some oysters, some cheese and the chance of a pipe of tobacco, than is the rich younker's fastidious taste by the peacock pasties and the glasses of champagne. Other Haarlem artists choose for the subjects of their pictures magnificent plate from the goldsmiths' studios, from a Vian and Lutma. In contrast to Luccullan Haarlem, the neighboring town of Leyden presents itself with dignity and authority as the old university town and the seat of orthodox theology. The still-life presentments of the Leyden painters are pictorial arrangements of books bound in pigskin, of writing materials, of notes and musical instruments; along with this is a glass of weak beer and a clay pipe, announcing an enjoyment which even the most starched scholar may permit himself. A death's head is not forgotten, there is also an hour-glass and a lamp as symbols of the transitoriness of all earthly learning and enjoyment. At The Hague it is not the court of the prince, but the famous Scheveningen fish-market which influences the painters in the choice of their subject. At Utrecht, again, refugees of the Reformed Faith from the Spanish Netherlands cultivate a species of flower- and fruit-painting of gorgeous color, and we soon find Jan de Heem distinguishing himself as the most important master of this

branch of art. In Amsterdam still-life painting only gained footing when Rembrandt's appearance called forth a new, and the most brilliant, phase of Dutch painting, and when, too, the riches of the metropolis attracted artists from all the neighboring States. The many-sidedness and grand development of still-life was therefore materially determined by artistic points of view which also principally influenced the choice of the subject. The hundred and more painters who applied themselves to this form of art are as different in their pictorial conception and treatment of still-life as their subjects are varied. Even if the presentment imposed certain restrictions, if the pictures of fish and silver vessels suggested light and cool painting, bouquets of flowers rich and vigorous color, if the "Vanitas" presentments required a monochrome treatment, we may yet observe innumerable, delicate variations—also in the pictorial treatment—according to the time and place, to the talent and training. A Gillig or Putter paints fish almost without color and cool in tone; a A. van Beijeren makes a luminous brilliant piece of color of the same subject; a Heda paints his breakfast in a cool light and with little local color; a Kalf or Claeuw with most gorgeous coloring and charming chiarascuro; while deHeem paints sweepingly and delicately, A van Beijeren lays on his colors as thickly and boldly as a modern Impressionist. It is the simplicity of the subject which makes the artists inventive in their choice and cultivation of every artistic means.

With specialists, as still-life painters are, we must not expect to find greater many-sidedness and a richer development in the individual artist. This is only to be observed with the most important and the most influential masters.

THE SUBJECT IN DUTCH PAINTING

ONE thing strikes you in studying the moral foundation of Dutch art, and that is the total absence of what we call now a subject.

From the day when painting ceased to borrow from Italy its style, its poetry, its taste for history, for mythology and Christian legends, up to the moment of decadence, when it returned thither,—from Bloemaert and De Poelemburg to Lairesse, Philippe Vandyck, and later Troost,—more than a century elapsed, during which the great Dutch School appeared to think of nothing but painting well. It was content to look around it, and to dispense with imagination. Nudities, which were out of place in this representation of real life, disappeared. Ancient history was forgotten, and contemporaneous history, too, which is the most singular phenomenon. There is hardly to be perceived, drowned in this vast sea of genre scenes, one picture like Terburg's *Peace of Münster,* or some few deeds of the maritime wars, represented by vessels cannonading each other,—for instance, an *Arrival of Maurice of Nassau at Scheveningen* (Cuyp, Six Museum); a *Departure of Charles II, from Scheveningen* (June 2, 1660), by Lingelbach, and this Lingelbach is a sorry painter. The great artists hardly treated such subjects. And apart from the painters of marines, or of exclusively military pictures, not even one of them seemed to have any aptitude for treating them. Van der Meulen, that fine painter, issue by Snayers of the School of Antwerp, a thorough Fleming, though adopted by France, pensioned by Louis XIV, and the historiographer of our French glories, gave to the Dutch anecdote painters a very seductive example, followed by nobody. The great civic representations of Ravesteyn, Hals, Van der Helst, Flinck, Karel du Jardin, and others, are, as is well known, portrait pictures, where the action is unimportant, and which, although historical documents of great interest, take no place in the history of the time.

In thinking of the events contained in the history of the seventeenth century in Holland, the gravity of the military deeds, the energy of this people, of soldiers and sailors in their fights, and what they suffered,—in imagining the spectacle that the country must have offered in those terrible times, one is filled with surprise to see their painting thus indifferent to what was the very life of the people.

There was fighting abroad by land and by sea, on the frontiers and in the heart of the country; at home they were tearing each other to pieces. . . . There was a permanent war with Spain, with England, with Louis XIV. Holland was invaded; how she defended herself is known: the peace of Münster was signed in 1648; the peace of Nimeguen, in 1678; the peace of Ryswick, in 1698. The war of the Spanish Succession opened with the new century, and it can be said that all the painters of the grand and pacific school of which I treat, died, having hardly ceased for a single day to hear the cannon. What they were doing at that time, their works show. The portrait painters painted their great warriors, their princes, their most illustrious citizens, their poets, their writers, themselves or their friends. The landscape painters inhabited the fields, dreaming, drawing animals, copying huts, living a farm-life, painting trees, canals, and skies, or they traveled; they went to Italy and established a colony there, met Claude Lorraine, forgot themselves at Rome, forgot their country, and died like Karel, without recrossing the Alps. Others scarcely came out of their studios but to frequent taverns, to prowl about places of ill-fame, to study their manners when they did not enter into them on their own account, which rarely happened.

The war did not prevent peaceful life somewhere, and into that tranquil and as it were indifferent corner they bore their easels, and pursued, with a placidity that may well surprise, their meditations, their studies, and their charming, smiling industry. And as every-day life went on all the same, it was domestic habits, private, rustic, or urban, that they undertook to paint in spite of everything, through everything, to exclusion of everything that caused the emotion, anguish, patriotic effort, and grandeur of their

country. Not a trouble, not an anxiety, existed in this world so strangely sheltered, that this might be taken for the golden age of Holland, if history did not inform us to the contrary.

Their woods are tranquil, the highways secure, boats come and go along the course of the canals; rustic festivities have not ceased; on the threshold of beer-shops men smoke, while dancing goes on within. There is hunting and fishing and promenading. A faint still smoke issues from the roofs of the little farmhouses, where nothing savors of danger. Children go to school, and within the dwellings there are the order, peace, and imperturbable security of happy days. The seasons succeed each other; there is skating on the waters that were navigated, fire on the hearth; doors are closed, curtains drawn; the asperities come from the climate and not from man. It is always the regular course of things that nothing deranges, and a permanent foundation of little daily facts with which they take so much delight in composing their excellent pictures.

When a skilful painter of equestrian scenes shows us by chance a canvas where horses are charging, men fighting with pistols and swords, where they are stamping, struggling, and exterminating each other quite fiercely, all this takes place in spots where war is out of place, and danger not at home. These murders savor of fantastic anecdotes, and it is perceived that the painter was not greatly moved by them himself. It was the Italians, Berghem, Wouwerman, Lingelbach, the not over-truthful painters of the picturesque, who perchance amused themselves by painting these things. Where did they see these fights?—on this side of, or beyond the mountains?

There is something of Salvator Rosa, minus the style, in these simulated skirmishes or grand battles, whose cause, moment, and theatre are unknown; nor is it very clear who are the parties engaged. The titles of the pictures themselves indicate sufficiently the part played by the imagination of the painters. The Hague Museum possesses two great pages, very fine and very bloody, where the blows fall thick, and wounds are not spared. One, by Berghem,—a very rare picture, astonishingly well exe-

cuted,—a *tour de force* in action, tumult, the admirable order of the effect, and the perfection of the details,—a canvas not at all historical,—bears for title, *A Convoy Attacked in a Mountain Pass.* The other, one of the largest pictures that Wouwerman has signed, is entitled *A Great Battle.* It recalls the picture at the Munich Pinakothek, known as the *Battle of Nordlingen;* but there is nothing more decided in this, and the historically national value of this very remarkable work is no better established than the veracity of Berghem's picture.

Everywhere, besides, there are episodes of brigandage or anonymous fights which certainly were not lacking among them, and yet they all have the appearance of being painted from hearsay, during or after their journeys in the Appennines.

Dutch history has not marked at all—or so little that it amounts to nothing—the painting of those troubled times, and seems not to have agitated the mind of the painters for a single moment. Note, moreover, that even in such of their painting as is properly picturesque and anecdotic, there is not the slightest anecdote to be perceived.

There is no well-determined subject, not one action that requires reflection upon the composition or is expressive or particularly significant. No invention, no scene which trenches upon the uniformity of this existence of the fields or the town, commonplace, vulgar, devoid of pursuits, of passions, one might almost say of sentiment. Drinking, smoking, dancing, and kissing maids cannot be called very rare or attractive incidents. Nor are milking cows, taking them to water, and loading haycarts, notable incidents in a life of husbandry.

One is forever tempted to question these indifferent and phlegmatic painters, and to ask them, Is there then nothing new? nothing in your barns and farms, nothing in your houses? There has been a high wind; has it destroyed nothing? There has been a thunderstorm; has the lightning struck nothing,—neither your fields, nor roofs, nor laborers? Children are born; are there no birthdays? They die; is there no mourning? You marry; are there no decent rejoicings? Do they never weep among you? You

have all been lovers, but how do we know it? You have suffered, you have pitied the misery of others,—you have had before your eyes all the wounds, the pains, the calamities of human life; where can it be discovered that you have had one day of tenderness, or sorrow, or true pity? Your time, like all others, has seen quarrels, passions, jealousies, gallant intrigues, and duels; what do you show us of all those? Plenty of libertine behavior, drunkenness, coarseness, sordid idleness; people who embrace as if they were fighting, and here and there fisticuffs and kicks exchanged in the exasperation of wine and love. You love children, you flog them, they do mischief in a corner, and such are your family pictures.

Compare epochs and countries. I do not speak of the contemporary German School, nor of the English School, where everything was subject, art, intention, as in their dramas, comedies and farces,—where painting is too impregnated with literature, since it lives but for that and in the eyes of certain people dies of it,—but take a catalogue of a French exhibition, read the titles of the pictures, and then look over those of the museums at Amsterdam and The Hague.

In France every picture which has not a title, and consequently contains no subject, runs a great risk of being reckoned as a work neither considered nor serious; and that is not only for today, it has been so for a hundred years. Since the day when Greuze imagined the picture of sentiment, and with the great applause of Diderot conceived a picture as a scene in a theatre is conceived, and put into painting the homely dramas of the family,—since that day what do we see? Has genre painting in France done anything but invent scenes, compel history, illustrate literature, paint the past, paint the present but little, contemporary France very little indeed, and give us a great many curiosities of foreign manners and climates?

It suffices to cite names to revive a long series of piquant and beautiful works, ephemeral or ever celebrated, all signifying something, representing all sorts of facts and sentiments, expressing passions or relating anecdotes, all having their principal person and their hero,—Granet,

Bonington, Leopold Robert, Delaroche, Ary Scheffer, Roqueplan, Decamps, Delacroix,—I stop with the dead artists. Do you remember the *Francis I., Charles V.,* the *Duc de Guise, Mignon, Margaret, The Lion Lover,* the *Vandyck* at London; all the pages borrowed from Goethe, Shakespeare, Byron, and Walter Scott, and from the history of Venice; the *Hamlets, Yoricks, Macbeths, Mephistopheles, Polonius, The Giaour, Lara, Goetz de Berlichingen, The Prisoner of Chillon, Ivanhoe, Quentin Durward, The Bishop of Liege,* and then *The Foscari, Marino Faliero* and *The Boat of Don Juan,* and yet again *The History of Samson, The Cimbri,* preceding the oriental curiosities? And since, if we prepare a list of the genre pictures that have year by year charmed, moved, and impressed us, from the *Scenes of the Inquisition,* and the *Colloquy of Poissy,* to *Charles V. at St. Just,*—if we recall, I say, in these last thirty years, whatever the French School has produced most striking and honorable in genre painting, we shall find that the dramatic, pathetic, romantic, historical, or sentimental element has contributed almost as much as the painters' talent to the success of their works.

Do you perceive anything like this in Holland? The catalogues are desperately insignificant and vague. *The Spinner with Cattle* at the Hague, of Karel du Jardin;—of Wouwerman, *The Arrival at the Inn, The Halt of the Hunters, The Country Riding School, The Hay Wagon* (a celebrated picture), *A Camp, The Hunters' Rest,* etc.;—of Berghem, *A Boar Hunt, An Italian Ford, A Pastoral,* etc.; —of Metzu, we have *The Hunter, The Lovers of Music;*— of Terburg, *The Despatch;*—and so on with Gerhard Douw, Ostade, Mieris, even with Jan Steen, the most wide-awake of all, and the only one who, by the profound or gross meaning of his anecdotes, is an inventor, an ingenius caricaturist, a humorist of the family of Hogarth, and a literary painter, almost a comic author in his facetiousness. The finest works are concealed under titles of the same platitude. The fine Metzu of the Van der Hoop Museum is called *The Hunter's Gift,* and no one would suspect that *The Rest by the Farm* designates an incomparable Paul Potter, the pearl of the d'Aremberg Gallery. We know

what is meant by *The Bull* of Paul Potter, and the still more celebrated *Cow Admiring Herself,* or the *Cow of St. Petersburg.* As to the *Anatomical Lecture,* and the *Night Watch,* I may be permitted to think that the significance of the subject is not what assures to these two works the immortality which they have acquired.

It seems, then, that everywhere but in the Dutch School are to be found gifts of the heart and mind, sensibility, tenderness, generous sympathy for the dramas of history, extreme experience of those of life, pathos, power to move, interest, unexpectedness, and instruction. And the school which has most exclusively occupied itself with the real world seems the one of all that has most despised moral interest, and while it is also the one which has most passionately devoted itself to the study of the picturesque, it seems less than any other to have discovered its living springs.

What reason had a Dutch painter to make a picture? None; and observe that no one ever asked him to do it. A peasant with a nose swollen with wine looks at you with his big eye, and laughs with all his teeth showing, while he lifts his jug;—if the thing is well painted, it has its price. With us, if a subject is lacking, there must be at least a true and lively sentiment and a perceptible emotion in the painter to take its place. A landscape not strongly tinted with the colors of a man is a failure. We do not know, as Ruysdael did, how to make a picture of the rarest beauty, of a stream of foaming water falling between brown rocks. An animal in the pasture *which has not its idea,* as peasants say of the instinct of brutes, is a thing not to be painted.

A very original painter of our time, an elevated soul, a sorrowful spirit, a good heart, and a truly rural nature, has spoken of the country and its country folk, of the asperity, the melancholy, and the nobility of their labor,—things that no Hollander would ever have thought of finding.* He has said them in a slightly barbarous language, and in formulas where the thought has more vigor and clearness than the hand. We have been infinitely grateful to him for his tendencies; we have seen in him in French painting something like the sensibility of a Burns less skilful in making

himself understood. To sum up the account, has he, or has he not made and left fine pictures? Have his form and his language,—I mean the exterior envelope without which the works of the spirit neither are nor live,—have they the qualities necessary to consecrate him as a fine painter, and assure his living for a long time? He is a profound thinker beside Paul Potter and Cuyp, he is an attractive dreamer compared with Terburg and Metzu; he has something incontestably noble when we think of the trivialities of Steen, of Ostade, and of Brouwer; as a man he can put them all to the blush, but as a painter does he equal them?

What is the conclusion? you ask.

First, is it necessary to conclude? France has shown much inventive genius, but few of the truly pictorial faculties. Holland has imagined nothing, but she has painted miraculously well. This is certainly a great difference. Does it follow that we must absolutely choose between the qualities which are opposite in two peoples, as if there were between them a certain contradiction which would render them irreconcilable? I really do not know exactly. Till now the thought has truly sustained only great plastic works. In reducing itself to enter into works of medium order, it seems to have lost its virtue.

Sensibility has saved some of them; curiousness has destroyed a great number; mind has ruined them all.

Is this the conclusion to be drawn from the preceding observations? Certainly another might be found, but today I do not perceive it.

* Jean Francois Millet.—TR.

GERMAN PAINTING

IT is well at the outset to acknowledge that German Renaissance painting is likely to prove less satisfying as a subject for study than painting of the same period done in Italy or in the Low Countries. To estimate aright the artistic accomplishment of the Germans during these fruitful centuries, it would be necessary to take into account the work of engravers and designers of wood-cuts, remarkable proficiency being manifested in both directions.

After a sojourn among the art galleries and art repositories of Italy, the general student carries away memories which are permanently inspiring. Reproductions of the great masterpieces in color or even black and white prints recall the emotions stimulated by the originals. Those who have never seen the originals may become familiar with them through copies, finding pleasure in their fine composition and artistic values.

To understand the situation in Germany during these centuries with which we are engaged, let us set aside for the time being the two great art centers of Renaissance Italy—Florence and Venice—and think of the art produced in the small towns, often comparatively isolated. Much of German painting done during the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries would compare with that produced in the hill towns of Italy, in Umbria, Lombardy and even in the Marches.

Again, while the majority of Renaissance paintings whether in Italy or Germany served the needs of religion, the subjects most in favor among the Italian painters are more acceptable to us today than those repeatedly reproduced by German artists. The Madonna and Child, the Nativity, Adoration, Flight into Egypt, and the ministry of Christ were continually treated by the Italians. We shall find these also treated by German artists but not so frequently as scenes of the Passion, which were represented again and again. Emphasis is placed today upon

the inspiring life of the founder of Christianity. History parallels again and again the agonies of his death; the example of his life is unique.

Italy lies adjacent to Greece and Renaissance Italy was powerfully affected by classical standards, set up by the ancient Greeks, who had been worshipers of beauty. The Teutonic peoples, on the other hand, never felt the hold of classical tenets to any such extent. German painters, like those of the Low Countries, were concerned in probing the inner life rather than depicting beauty, which, from their viewpoint, was accidental or immaterial.

"In considering the art of any country, it is necessary to examine not only into the conditions under which that art developed and the traditions by which it was governed in its development, but, above all, into the character of the people. For the art of any people is the reflection of the common characteristics of the people. . . . The keynote of the German character is emotion, and the ideal of German art is not beauty but expression. The strength and the weakness alike in German art are the outcome of this intense emotionalism. . . . What the German apprehends as real is the *inner nature*—character and emotion—and this he expresses in art to the disregard of beauty of *external* form and feature. Hence one of the greatest superficial attractions is lacking, for the most part, in German art. Few German Virgins, for instance, can vie with the Italian Madonnas in formal beauty."[1]

Finally, the Reformation rapidly gained ground in Germany and, as a result of the enthusiasm it engendered, much early art was destroyed. Erasmus wrote to a friend of the thorough work done by the "picture stormers" wherein he said: "Smiths and carpenters were sent to remove the images from the churches. The roods and the unfortunate saints were cruelly handled. Not a statue was left in church, niche or monastery. The saints on the walls were whitewashed. Everything combustible was burnt. What would not burn was broken to pieces. Nothing was spared, however precious and beautiful." Small wonder then that surviving examples of the German primitives are

few and that many works are known to us by description only.

The earliest art center in German territory arose in Prague under patronage of Karl IV who became king of Bohemia in 1333 and presently gathered around his court artists from various localities. Tommaso da Modena, believed to have been a pupil of Giotto, is known to have executed commissions for him in 1357. The encouragement which Karl IV gave to the fine arts resulted in work of promise but it terminated almost as rapidly as it originated and its only lasting result was the impetus it gave to painting in other centers.

1. The Primitives

It is convenient to classify German painters according to their geographical location, recognizing the three schools of Cologne, Swabia and Nuremberg, and of these the first to gain prominence was the school of Cologne.

The painters of Cologne were firmly bound to medieval traditions. The golden backgrounds, made popular by Byzantine artists, were generally retained by them and the influence of the mosaicist is discernible. They were exponents of a religious mysticism which gained considerable ground in Germany of the early fourteenth century. The teaching of the mystics was that man must surrender his will in order to express the will of God within him. God was apprehended in all manifestations of nature and eighteenth century romanticists were anticipated in the conception of nature as expressing harmony with the moods of man.

Among Cologne painters, Meister Wilhelm of Herle is celebrated, although little is known of his life. Thanks to the painstaking of a chronicler, it is recorded that "At this time there was a painter in Cologne whose name was Wilhelm. He was the best painter in all the German lands and was so esteemed by the masters. He painted anyone of any type as if he were alive."

Meister Wilhelm has been the subject of academic dispute and considerable work which was formerly attributed to him is no longer placed to his credit. The celebrated

altar of St. Clara, now the High Altar in the Cologne Cathedral, is considered to be his and the triptych, containing the picture known as the *Madonna of the Bean Blossom.*

Greater than Meister Wilhelm was his pupil, Stephan Lochner, born on the shores of Lake Constance but early removing to Cologne where his active period was passed. When Dürer visited Cologne in 1520, seventy years after the death of the painter, he paid "two white pfennig" to have an altar picture done by Stephan opened for his view. Made originally for the Rathaus Chapel, this is now in St. Michael's Chapel in the Cologne cathedral. When closed, the triptych presents a picture of the Annunciation; opened, its central panel is filled with an Adoration of the Kings, St. Ursula and her maidens being on the right and St. Gereon and his knights on the left. Both were patron saints of Cologne.

Lochner's *Madonna of the Rose Arbour,* now exhibited in the Cologne gallery, is best known of his productions.

Although Lochner had a large following, he did not establish an enduring school of painting, for in the latter part of the fifteenth century, Flemish influence became overpowering and the mystical painters were submerged in a wave of realism. The influence of such men as Hubert van Eyck and his brother Jan, Memling and Roger van der Weyden may be readily discerned. Few names come down from this period and for convenience modern critics distinguish the more prominent painters by identifying them with their greatest works,—as, for example, the Master of the *Life of Mary;* the Master of the *Glorification of Mary;* the Master of *St. George's Altar;* of *The Passion;* of the *Holy Kinship,* and so on.

As would be expected, portraiture began to assert itself under this Flemish influence and the dreamy, contemplative figures, with their far-away gaze, gave place to those bearing resemblance to human beings, surrounded by objects of everyday life. Although religious paintings continued most in demand, prominent men sat for their portraits. Best known of these early portraitists is Barthel Bruyn (1493-1557). His portrait of the burgomeister

of Cologne testifies to certain ability. His sons were also painters, though lacking the skill of their father.

The work of the Cologne School has historical rather than artistic interest. It was born of a religious awakening which stimulated thought and prompted introspection and renunciation. It was sharply limited in scope and in some respects might be compared to the Sienese School. Miss Dickinson, who has made a useful contribution to the study of German painting and whom we have already quoted, summarized its accomplishment in this way:

"The study of the art of Cologne brings a measure of disappointment. It did not develop in steady progression to culminate in the XVI century in masters of the greatness of Dürer and Holbein. Instead, after the middle of the XV century it fell wholly under the domination of the art of the Netherlands, to which its individuality was subordinated to such a degree that it is with difficulty that the works of Cologne artists can be distinguished from those of painters in the Netherlands. Such an imitative art could possess within itself no vital element that would grow, develop and finally bring forth, in the fulness of its strength, such masterpieces of original creative genius as were the fullest expressions of the art of Augsburg and Nuremberg. In truth, the art of Cologne reached its zenith in the first half of the XV century, in the works of Stephan Lockner."[2]

[1] Dickinson: *German Masters of Art*, 4.
[2] Ibid., 80.

2. Cranach of Saxony

Two great geniuses arose in Germany during the sixteenth century and it is of them that we are disposed to think when German painting is mentioned—the great portraitist, Holbein the Younger, and the artist Dürer. However, certain other painters should be included in the most meager survey of the subject. Lucas, born about 1472, was a native of Cranach, a little Franconian town, whose name he adopted. He was made court painter to Elector Frederick the Wise who held Court in Wittenberg. Cranach became a warm friend of Luther, whose religious teachings strongly affected his art. He was a tireless producer and

had many followers. It is now believed that a considerable portion of the work heretofore regarded as his was in reality executed by his pupils—school pieces, in other words.

Among his religious pictures, the *Rest in the Flight into Egypt* and the *Crucifixion,* wherein the painter placed himself and Luther, are well known. He repeated the subject of Adam and Eve many times. Portraits of Frederick the Wise, of Luther and the artist survive. Among his mythical paintings, the *Judgment of Paris* merits attention.

3. Grünewald

It is regrettable that so little is known of Matthaus Grünewald, who takes rank with Germany's most gifted colorists. He was born in Frankfort, probably in 1468, and died about 1529. Nothing is known of his early training and few of his works survive. His masterpiece is an altar-piece done for a monastery at Isenheim, Grünewald's painted panels being joined to a carved central panel of St. Anthony, patron saint of the cloister. On either side, scenes in the life of St. Anthony were painted—the Temptation in the Wilderness and a traditional meeting with St. Paul the Hermit. When the hinged wings folded once against the central panel, the Annunciation, Nativity and Resurrection were shown. Completely closed, an unforgettable view of the Crucifixion by Grünewald might be seen. "On a small, rocky plateau in the foreground the cross is erected and on it, but little above the ground, hangs or rather towers, the great form of the tortured Christ. No single detail of his suffering is spared us. The muscles are twisted, the limbs distorted, the fingers spread convulsively, the feet deformed by the agony. Every pore of the body has sweat blood. . . .

"Reviewing again all the pictures on the Isenheim Altar, the phantastic, the visionary or ecstatic and the tragic, we know not whether we are more amazed at the master's gigantic and original conceptions, his marvelous imagination or his mastery of the technical problems involved. . . . Never before was such Holy Night, such a Resurrection or Entombment presented. Nor could he

have ever seen anything in art to suggest to him the wonderful colour effects in these scenes. . . . All that was small and painfully painstaking in German art vanished in his pictures. He let go of himself and his genius and the result was the expression of big, original conceptions with tremendous impressiveness and with an almost overpowering emotional effect which was heightened by his marvellous color and light."[1]

[1] Dickinson: *Holbein*, 112.

4. The Holbeins

Holbein is greatest of the Swabian artists, as Dürer mounts head and shoulders above others of Nuremberg, Franconia. Augsburg was second only to Nuremberg as a cultural center in the sixteenth century, although art did not develop as early here as in Cologne.

Hans Holbein the Elder (1460-1524) may have traveled in Italy during his years of journeyship. His work bears the stamp of Venetian influence. He painted the usual religious pictures, such being most often in demand by patrons. In 1484 he received a commission of unusual interest from St. Catherine's Convent, in Augsburg. By special dispensation, the nuns of this cloister were promised the same merits which a pilgrimage to the churches of Rome brought provided they made a pilgrimage through their own cloister with ardent religious devotion. To impress upon their minds the associations of the Roman churches, their abbess ordered pictures of these to be made at the different shrines selected, scenes from the lives of the patron saints of each being depicted. At least two of these commissions were executed by Holbein the Elder—that of representing Santa Maria Maggiore, with the accompanying martrydom of St. Dorothea, and St. Paul's with scenes from the apostle's life. In the picture of St. Paul's basilica, the artist included his own likeness and the likenesses of his sons, Ambrosius and Hans.

Such work as survives from the hand of Holbein the Elder indicates that he was a close observer but unequal to his more gifted son in penetrating to what lies beneath the surface.

Taught at first by their father, Ambrosius and Hans were early prepared for their work as journeymen. They went to Basle, then humming with printing presses which were rapidly increasing the number of books in Europe. The writings of Erasmus were for the most part printed in Basle, at the press of Frobenius. The *Praise of Folly* was even then in process of printing and the printer allowed Hans Holbein to make wood-cuts for the book.

Conditions appearing to be favorable, Holbein the Younger settled in Basle, where he married and established himself. The City Council presently selected him to make frescoes for their hall, the subjects being the judgments of just judges. Unfortunately these no longer exist. Holbein continued to be much in demand and was commissioned to paint the shutters for the cathedral organ.

Aside from his art, Holbein was a person of parts. He enjoyed the friendship of the great Erasmus, whose portrait he painted three different times. During a visit to England, he met Thomas More and painted the portrait of Archbishop Warham.

In course of time the Reformation made Basle a tumultuous place, a tiny world wherein the differences of Reformer and Conformist were hotly fought out. This was disturbing to an artist and induced Holbein to return to England. However, his friend More had fallen from favor and was unable to aid him longer.

It was during this second sojourn in England that Holbein executed that great masterpiece, the portrait of George Gisze of Danzig. He also received a commission from the king to decorate Whitehall with portraits of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour and Henry VII and Elizabeth of York. A fire afterwards destroyed much of this work.

Holbein painted the famous portrait of Jane Seymour and of a Danish princess whom Henry VIII considered as a possible successor to the queen.

Throughout the Middle Ages, the Dance of Death had been a theme of untiring interest. Death was assumed to have come into the world in consequence of the disobedience of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. With admirable impartiality, death overtakes king and peasant

alike. His approach to men of all degrees had been represented in marble, carved wood, in all ways known to artist and poet. Among the numerous wood-cuts made by Holbein, his series of forty-five scenes in the *Dance of Death,* finished in 1536, is noteworthy.

Dickinson, in discussing Holbein's genius, points to the "pure beauty caught in material things, the texture of the skin, hair and beard, the shimmer or the lustre of lawn, silk and fur, the glow of brass, the transparency of glass and water, the dewiness of a flower, the exquisite depth and luminosity of colours melting into one another in perfect harmony, having the effect on the senses of an intoxicating perfume, a strain of enchanting music."[1]

Holbein died of the plague in 1543. He ranks with the greatest portraitists of all time.

[1] Dickinson: *Holbein,* 177.

HOLBEIN

From his *Life*, by R. N. Wornum

HOLBEIN probably arrived in England towards the close of the year 1526 or when the eighteenth year of the reign of Henry VIII was advanced in its second semester, but the time is not certain. The plague was raging in Basel in the summer and autumn of this year, and this may have in some measure expedited Holbein's decision to leave the city for this country. The king was yet living in peace with his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, and Cardinal Wolsey, the butcher's son, was still living at Whitehall (then York Place) as supreme minister of the realm. . . . Holbein was in his thirty-second year, in the prime of his manhood and at the zenith of his powers as an artist. . . .

To More we know that Holbein had access at once, and was kindly received, but it was years hence before he approached, or probably was even known to the king personally, or any other of the exalted personages at the head of the state. Still, the king can scarcely have remained altogether unacquainted with his works, as he may easily have seen some of them at Sir Thomas's, on the visits he occasionally paid him at his house in Chelsea: the king took great pleasure in passing a few quiet hours with his favorite councillor.

John Browne was at this time sergeant-painter to the king, an office he held for more than twenty years. . . . The principal painter in England in Holbein's time appears to have been Luke Hornbolt of Ghent, if we may at all judge from the salary he received. I have already had occasion to refer to him as being in all probability the "Master Luke" through whom Holbein was led to take up miniature painting. . . .

We may consider 1527, the nineteenth year of Henry VIII, and when he was first smitten with the charms of Anne Boleyn, as the first year of Holbein's activity in

England; but there is no evidence that he approached the king or any member of the royal family at this time, or even previously to his visit to Basel in 1529. When he returned from Basel and paid England a second visit, apparently in the end of the year 1531, Queen Catherine had already retired to the More in Hertfordshire, another palace that had belonged to Cardinal Wolsey. Though Holbein may have been presented to Henry VIII in 1532 and even have painted his portrait as early as 1532 or 1533, he does not appear to have entered the king's service until some years later. When John Browne died in 1532, Andrew Wright succeeded him as sergeant-painter, and continued to hold that office during nearly the whole of Holbein's residence here. And though Wright died before Holbein, Holbein was not appointed his successor. Whether such an appointment was beneath the reputation or position of our German painter, or above his reach, I will not venture to guess. Holbein may either have wanted court-influence, or possibly his reputation was not then what it has since become. . . .

Either late in 1526 or early in 1527 it seems pretty certain that Holbein was received by Sir Thomas More at Chelsea; and in this chapter we have to review the labours and events of this first visit to England, the duration of which extended to between two and three years, a period that he might be absent from Basel without forfeiting his rights of citizenship, and a term for which a man might reasonably leave his family without being liable to the accusation of desertion of it. Holbein however no doubt had the required leave of absence from the town-council, at the head of which was some time during his absence his friend and patron, Jacob Meier zum Hasen, of whose family we have the noble portraits at Darmstadt and at Dresden.

The painter as the guest and retainer of Sir Thomas More, who lived at Chelsea in a house built by himself, and where he had a small farm, would necessarily be circumscribed in his practice to the circle of Sir Thomas, which was however an extensive and a learned one. Many of More's friends are among the Windsor drawings. Archbishop Warham was intimate with Erasmus, as well as Sir

Thomas More; and the king's astronomer Kratzer, was also in the same circle. . . .

The dated portraits of this period are not many but we have a few very interesting ones: that of Archbishop Warham, the staunch opponent of all church reform, and no doubt as good a hater of the Protestants as Sir Thomas himself; and that of Sir Henry Guildford, the Comptroller of the King's Household, whom I assume also to have been an intimate friend of Sir Thomas More: both have shaven faces, beards were not yet in fashion. These were high personages for the obscure young German painter to have as sitters, but they were of course procured through his patron's influence, not his own reputation, though Holbein proved himself quite worthy of the occasion, and did not allow his opportunities to be lost. Both these portraits are noble pictures.

Of both the above portraits there are drawings or preparatory sketches in the Windsor portfolios, which collection, perhaps the most valuable of all the Holbein treasures preserved to us, was apparently the gradual accumulation of the studies made by the painter for the various pictures he executed during his fourteen or fifteen years' practice as a portrait painter in this country. . . .

One of the finest portraits of importance painted in this country, and a remarkable specimen of the painter's powers, is that of William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, a half-length, on panel, nearly full face, and showing both hands; a crucifix in his right hand, an open book near his left, and a brown damask curtain in the background. This is a picture as well as a portrait; all the accessories are excellent, and especially the jewelled crucifix, which is precise and accurate without being hard. We have two excellent examples of this picture:—that exhibited at Manchester in 1857 and now at Lambeth Palace, and that in the Louvre. The two pictures are so very similar that one may be a copy of the other, yet they have their differences. The Louvre example is much the more highly coloured and is painted with a thicker impasto; the Lambeth example is more carefully modelled, more dryly executed and grey in color. . . .

Sir Thomas More's was naturally one of the first of the portraits painted by Holbein in England. . . .

As it is impossible to give any detailed or accurate account of what Holbein did during this first visit to England, and as Sir Thomas More's guest, we may at once turn our attention to the one great work of this time—"The family of Sir Thomas More." This picture, a few recorded portraits, and possibly the two compositions illustrating Riches and Poverty, executed for the house of the Hanse merchants here, exhaust the material we have to consider as the results of Holbein's first sojourn among us.

"For nothing," says Walpole, "has Holbein's name been oftener mentioned than for the picture of Sir Thomas More's family. Yet of six pieces extant on this subject, the two smaller are certainly copies, the three larger probably not painted by Holbein, and the sixth, though an original picture, most likely not of Sir Thomas and his family." This is certainly not a very satisfactory state of affairs, though Walpole has apparently exaggerated the embroilment for the sake of a little more point and effect in his antithesis, as was his wont. . . .

Though there may be a comparative dryness or positiveness in many of the portraits of Holbein, I do not admit a want of harmony in them; a general truth implies a harmony; indistinctness and obscurity are not harmony. If every object is true in itself and as a component part true relatively to other component parts, it must be a harmony, and is in itself a living work of art.

Whether such a work of art in painting can or ought to be thoroughly separated from, or made independent of its back-ground, is a fair question. In looking at an acquaintance, we certainly do not either look at or see the back-ground, but it is always there; we can look at it if we choose, and when we do we see something that has little or nothing to do with our acquaintance. In a painted portrait we must certainly have the ground, and doubtless the greatest masters have done well when they so toned this ground into retirement that we overlook it. In Holbein's grounds there are often two conventionalisms: he made them generally of a greenish hue, choosing this color

perhaps with the view of heightening the effect of the flesh tones, and he also very often wrote the person's name or date on this ground, in such case certainly treating it as if it were something utterly distinct from the portrait; a proceeding which true imitative art must reject. Still as Holbein has sometimes made his ground and his picture distinct, we may also judge them as two, and not require them to be a perfect harmony; we must look at the picture, separating it, in such cases from its ground, as we invariably separate it from its frame. Holbein's portraits themselves are always living harmonies. In his drawings where we have no backgrounds we feel this distinctly enough; many of these drawings are extremely free and yet accurately true, and as nearly perfect as the work of man can be.

Many men have given us fine effects, but few indeed have worked like Holbein, and one should be sorry for the sake of a few more fine effects, to give up the living harmonies of this remarkable painter. We feel as if we had known or seen the men that Holbein has painted; he has reproduced nature, while your clever painters have only too often used nature as a mere means of showing their own cleverness.

* * * * * * *

After the completion of the picture of the More family, Holbein may have felt himself at liberty to return home, in compliance possibly as much with his own wishes to rejoin his family as with the desire of the authorities of Basel, who were anxious for the return of a painter highly prized and honored by the dignitaries of so great a prince as the King of England: his two years' leave of absence had certainly expired, and he was bound to return according to the laws of the municipality, unless by neglecting the duties of citizenship he should forfeit its rights also. No citizen of Basel could enter the service of any foreign prince without the consent of the city; according to an order of the Great Council, in the year 1521. . . .

The condition of Basel held out but few inducements to the visit of an artist at this time. Religious dissension had reached that pitch in 1529 that many of its principal residents had been forced to emigrate, and among these were

Erasmus, the Burgomaster Meier zum Hasen, and some other of Holbein's friends and patrons. Erasmus gives a sad picture of the animosity of the reformers, incensed by the abuse of images by the ecclesiastics, and accordingly the Iconoclasts showed as little discrimination in their throwing down as others had shown in their setting up.

Erasmus, in a letter to his friend Pirkaimer, dated the 9th of May of this year, says that there was not a statue left in its place, neither in the churches nor in the vestibules, nor in the porches; not even in the monasteries. The wall-paintings were all whitewashed over; what could be burnt was cast into the flames, and what not, was broken to pieces. Neither the intrinsic value nor the merit of a work of art was of any avail to save it. The destruction was the more complete because many were the destroyers of their own property, out of a spirit of fanatical reaction. Still, something was saved, not a few having been removed or concealed; several of Holbein's own works perished though some were in a manner afterwards restored, as, for example, the *Last Supper,* in Basel Museum.

It was during this first return, in 1530, that Holbein completed the painting of the council-chamber, and for which he received the payments already given, amounting to seventy-two florins. . . . When the council-chamber was once finished there seems to have been a total lack of worthy employment to detain him, satisfactorily to himself, from returning to his wealthy, commercial and courtly patrons in England. . . .

Of the year 1531 we have no known works by Holbein, in England, miniatures or otherwise; even if known to the king at this time, he was certainly not in his service.

Of the year 1532 we have several dated portraits but these are chiefly of Germans, apparently merchants settled here; and this would seem to show that Holbein had no special patronage to cause his return to England, no individual great patron to supply the place of Sir Thomas More. He might have felt himself quite justified in venturing his fortunes in London, on the mere strength of the reputation he had already acquired, by the many excellent

works he had produced during his first visit; he had of course also made numerous acquaintances, and it is but natural that he should be more closely allied with his own countrymen, many of whom were settled in London, than with foreigners.

Among the portraits of this year ascribed to Holbein we have those of two German merchants, dated: George Gyzen, at Berlin; and the nameless member of the Steelyard, at Windsor. The latter, "a merchant, in a black cap, and a knife in his hand, about to cut the seal of a letter," is said to have been presented by Sir Harry Vane to Charles I. . . .

The superb portrait at Berlin is painted with a different palette; it is not more accurately executed than the Windsor picture, but is more delicate in its details and much richer in colour. Indeed it shows the highest Flemish finish, and is so delicate, so rich and clear in color, as to suggest a different hand from that which produced the other authentic works of our painter at this time; though there may have been sufficient reasons for the extra care bestowed on this remarkable portrait, which is, however, unusually large for Holbein.

5. Dürer

The elder Dürer came from Hungary when a young man and settled in Nuremberg. By trade, he was a goldsmith. Albrecht, the third of his eighteen children, was set to learn his father's work but continually yearned to be a painter; so at last he was permitted to study to this end.

In Dürer's Diary has been found this entry: "In 1486, on St. Andrew's Day, my father apprenticed me for three years to Michael Wolgemut. During this period God granted me industry, so that I learned well, though I had much to suffer from my fellow students."

In 1490, then being nineteen years old, he set out for his period of journeying. He visited various towns of Germany and studied for a while in Colmar. Four years later, he returned to Nuremberg and his father arranged for him a marriage of convenience. Generally speaking, his biographers are disposed to accept the tradition that he was

unhappy in his domestic relations. No children came to bless the union. His mother seems to have been closer to him than any other and after her own home was broken by the loss of her husband, she made her abode with her now famous son.

Dürer was a tireless worker and his productions were numerous. To estimate his creative genius it would be necessary to take into account his engravings and woodcuts. Most of his paintings had religious subjects and he made the conventional altarpieces representing the Nativity, Adoration and Crucifixion.

Like most of the northern artists, Dürer was skilled as a portraitist. Many prominent people of the age sat for him, including the emperor and others of exalted position. He followed the career of Erasmus with attention and made his portrait. One of his best known paintings is a self-portrait.

By 1505 he had established a reputation the fame of which extended beyond the borders of his own country. Venice attracted him; thither he went, there to achieve some of his best work. He received the commission to paint an altarpice for the new building which German merchants were erecting in that city, to replace one which had recently been destroyed by fire. This was the celebrated *Madonna of the Rosaries,* also known as the *Madonna of the Rose Garlands.* His own figure and some of the dignitaries of the age were given place in the picture.

The younger Venetian artists looked with cold disfavor upon this foreigner whose laurels they were petty enough to covet. Only Giovanni Bellini, then above eighty years of age, welcomed the German painter. It is related that Bellini begged for one of the brushes with which he painted hair and only by demonstration could he be convinced that Dürer accomplished his results with an ordinary brush.

It was during his sojourn in Venice that he painted *Christ with the Doctors* and executed many portraits. The Senate offered him an annual pension if he would remain. However, Dürer believed that his proper place was in his own native town and it is probable that he realized that the opposition of local painters would be strengthened and

intensified by a longer visit. After his return to Nuremberg he was commissioned by the City Council to paint a large picture of Charlemagne and another of Sigismund. These still exist, although they have been injured by too frequent restoration.

On the occasion of the coronation of Charles V. at Antwerp, Dürer journeyed thither to observe the ceremonies. He was the recipient of many courteous attentions on the part of Flemish painters, who recognized him as one of the greatest of living artists.

Only a short time before his death, he painted two panels, each bearing the portraits of two apostles done in oil. These he seems to have considered his best work and he presented them to the city of Nuremberg.

Despite Dürer's unquestioned skill and creative ability, there seems to be something labored in his art which distinguishes it in that respect from more spontaneous productions of Raphael and certain other Italian painters. Indeed, Dürer is not to be seen at his best in oil painting. Rather, it is necessary to turn to his line work in engravings and woodcuts to discover the dramatic intensity of German art. There is movement in these and marked evidence of creative genius.

As early as 1498 Dürer completed his first series of woodcuts, fifteen in number, to illustrate a Latin version of the Apocalypse. Afterwards he set forth the life of Mary in simple scenes which are valued particularly today for the light they shed on peasant life in sixteenth century Germany. He made marginal designs for a magnificent copy of the Book of Hours, prepared for the Emperor Maximilian and repeatedly he illustrated the Passion.

In recognition of Dürer as her most distinguished son, the citizens of Nuremberg acquired his home more than a century ago, which is preserved as a museum. Here have been gathered together whatever documents and other material claim close association with his active years.

After his death, even while he lived, a host of painters did him the compliment to imitate his style but, lacking his sensitive feeling and dramatic sweep, their efforts were futile.

Nurtured in a home of piety, Dürer was disposed to ponder the sober side of existence and as he advanced in years a melancholy settled upon him. The times were critical. It was in 1520 that Luther posted his theses and disturbances began that were to set household against household and town against town for more than one hundred years. Dürer sympathized heartily with Luther in his desire for reform but, like Erasmus, he was unwilling to countenance a total break with the church.

In oil, Dürer is seen to advantage in the self-portrait, already mentioned, in the portrait of Hans Imhoff, in *The Apostles,* now in Munich, the altarpieces of the Rosaries, now at Prague, and in several other religious pieces. His engraving of *The Knight, Death and the Devil* is a masterpiece, while his woodcuts comprise five important series.

IV

FRENCH PAINTING

PAINTING developed slowly in France and those who would trace its beginnings must realize at the outset that the work of the French primitives does not compare with that done during the same period in Italy. Rather, the student of French medieval art must be content to follow the activities of workers in tapestry, stained glass, and of the miniaturists who made beautiful the hand illuminated books.

Gothic architecture found its completest expression in France, whither we must go to see the perfection of Gothic cathedrals. The fundamentals of Gothic structure determined that wall spaces must of necessity be broken. Windows wrought of colored glass were admirably suited to these Gothic churches and the subdued light which penetrated them seemed in all respects in harmony with their purpose of religious worship.

Whereas frescoes were widely in demand in Italian palaces, in France the castle walls were ordinarily covered with tapestries. Designers of these woven pictures, designers of stained glass windows and illuminators of manuscripts were all in demand. Consequently, the artistic genius which elsewhere sought expression in fresco, tempera, or oil, manifested itself here in these directions.

On the other hand, it would be a mistake to assume that painting was wholly absent from medieval France. Some early altar-pieces and religious paintings still survive. According to some critics, the two early art centers, Tours and Paris, gave indication of much promise but their productions were submerged by an influx of Italian work under the patronage of Francis I and his immediate successors. So far no very convincing testimony has been forthcoming in support of the theory that the primitives were numerous. Authorities just as competent oppose the

notion, claiming that the reason we hear of so few early painters in France is that only a few ever existed. Be this as it may, it is certain that the productions of these first painters need not detain the general student.

We have noted, in course of our earlier study, that sixteenth century kings of France attempted to win portions of Italy, sending soldiers into the peninsula to wage desultory warfare. Regardless of the political significance of the projection of France into Italy, there were inevitable cultural results, not the least of which was the awakening of interest in art on the part of Francis I and his nobles. After experience had taught him conclusively that warfare was scarcely his forte, this monarch turned his energies into a very different channel and attempted to make his palace comparable to those he had seen beyond the Alps. Fontainebleau was begun and decorators were essential to its completion. Francis I did his utmost to encourage Italian painters to reside at his Court. Leonardo da Vinci had passed that period of his life wherein extensive undertakings in painting attracted him; yet he abode for three years under the patronage of the French king. Andrea del Sarto was induced to come to France and only permitted to go back to Italy when he pleaded for a little time to visit his wife. Even so, the French monarch supplied him funds with which to purchase Italian paintings, he agreeing to bring these with him on his return. We have already learned that he shamefully abused the trust placed in him, and it was merely due to the king's generous nature that Andrea was allowed to keep his ill-gotten gain without disastrous results to himself.

We hear of another painter, called Il Rosso because of his inordinate use of red, and most important of them all, if we are to judge by his accomplishment, was Primaticcio, whose extensive decoration at Fontainebleau continued after the death of Francis I and far into the reign of Henri II. The hearty encouragement given to all these Italian artists testifies to the eagerness with which Valois rulers welcomed them, since native painters were lacking to serve their requirements.

Cellini, the goldsmith, might well be added to the list of gifted Italians who journeyed to France in the sixteenth century, but it has been conclusively proved that his statements must be taken with due allowance. Francis I certainly desired his presence at first but, because of Cellini's quarrelsome nature, he was soon embroiled with others. Despite his stirring account of the favors he received, he went back to Italy because he had incurred the marked displeasure of the French king. Even so, his highly interesting autobiography throws light upon prevailing conditions at the French Court.

1. The Fontainebleau School

The so-called School of Fontainebleau resulted from the work of Primaticcio and the corps of assistants who aided him in his elaborate decoration of the palace, but a little reflection will convince us that it is idle to seek the origins of French national art in the great frescoes depicting stories of ancient gods and goddesses which Italian artists spread over the royal palace and over the wall of châteaus bestowed by kings upon their mistresses. Beyond doubt, French painting was somewhat influenced by their work but it was an alien art, acceptable to those who employed the artists and to those who gazed upon their achievements, but certainly something wholly apart from native French expression.

By the side of this Italian art, Flemish art flourished. We have already seen that Flanders was united to Burgundy for more than a century and ruled by Valois princes, who were almost always patrons of art. Flemish painters were continually employed by the Burgundian dukes, at a time when orders were seldom forthcoming at home. As might be expected, it was in the field of portraiture that their genius found finest expression. Due to the long residence of the Clouet family in France, quite a complete gallery of French portraits still contributes to the social history of the times.

Jean Clouet (1475-1541) came to the French Court in 1516. During his active life he made portraits of the distinguished men and women who gathered around Francis I. Later his most gifted son, François Clouet (1500-1572) continued to serve the king, painting Court celebrities. Jean Clouet's portrait of Francis I is one of the treasures of the Louvre.

The palace of the Louvre was begun in 1541. Nearly twenty years later, Catherine de' Medici, wife of Henri II, son and successor of Francis I, built the Tuileries. Afterward a long gallery was constructed to join the two palaces.

During the reign of Francis I, Fontainebleau was given greatest attention, for it was the pride of the monarch's heart. When he died, Primaticcio was even then engaged

upon the Ulysses Gallery, which was finished under Henri II; thereupon, the painter proceeded to decorate the great Ball Room. The themes which he developed were Italian, or, to speak more truly, they were Greek themes given an Italian turn. The style wherein these classical themes were set forth was likewise Italian.

Primaticcio died in 1570 and Niccolo of Modena followed him the next year. With their passing the so-called "invasion" of Italian art came to an end in France, although it did not cease to wield great influence.

Primaticcio was somewhat influenced by Michael Angelo, but his style is more suggestive of Giulio Romano and Correggio. He had been one of the latter's pupils.

2. Seventeenth Century Painting

The first half of the seventeenth century was transitional so far as French painting is concerned. Its two greatest exponents dwelt away from France, spending most of their active years in Italy. They came under the sway of classical ideals, which were paramount in Italy at this time. As a result, their work and that of their followers is usually designated as "classical."

In the year 1660, Louis XIV began to reign in his own right and his autocratic will stamped itself so indelibly upon the age that his name is inseparably associated with the painting and furniture produced for nearly fifty years. Indeed, the fine arts lent themselves to the exaltation of his majesty before 1660. From infancy everything had been done by his supporters to magnify his name and to revive in his person the conception of royalty which came into Europe with Diocletian.

At the beginning of the century, the painting executed in France was in all essentials either Italian or Flemish. By the close of the hundred years, it had become wholly French. When, in 1620, Marie de' Medici decided to decorate the Luxembourg Palace, she was obliged to bring Rubens out of Flanders, for there was no native painter of sufficient ability to satisfy her needs. Rubens spent several years in France but his work was so virile, so thoroughly individual, that it did not exert the influence one might

suppose. After his return to Antwerp, another of his countrymen, Philippe de Champaigne of Brussels, succeeded him in serving the Court.

Although painting had been little more than an appendage of the Court in the age of Francis I, this was no longer true. Itinerant painters from Flanders journeyed throughout the length and breadth of the land, executing such commissions as they were able to secure, were they large or small. Church paintings were more in demand and increasingly representatives of the rising middle class desired to perpetuate themselves in portraits. The portraits of this period were unlike those of the age of Clouet, being more individualized. François Clouet in particular affected certain mannerisms that make the identification of his work a simple matter. Prosperous burghers and provincial clerics supplied most of the commissions filled by these journeying painters of the north, who were so numerous that the productions of the period offer considerable variety.

While it was no longer the custom for Italian painters to go to France to fill royal commissions, Rome attracted the art student and the influence of Italian painting was strong. Rome was to the seventeenth century what Paris has been since, the artistic center. Every aspiring French painter dreamed of going to Rome and working for a time under the spell of the Eternal City. Poussin and Claude, whose paintings surpass all contemporary French work, found their inspiration there.

This much is to be noted, as one compares the work of the native painter with that done by foreign itinerant artists in the first half of the seventeenth century: the Frenchmen exhibited more creative ability and initiative than the Flemings but were lacking in skillful execution. Slowly but surely, painting was becoming imbued with French ideals and was no longer an alien art brought into the land from without.

In 1648 The Academy of Painting and Sculpture was founded under royal patronage. Those who established it did not appreciate the fact that art, to be great, must be left free and unhampered. So this institution, like many

another, became part of a political machine to mould public opinion and the task before it was to make France supreme in Europe and Louis XIV supreme in France.

In the process of making painting nationally expressive, the work of the LeNain brothers deserves attention. There were three of them and their methods of treatment were so similar that it is customary to discuss their pictures together. Whereas much of the painting done in France had hitherto pertained to the more prosperous classes, the LeNains painted the peasants. Their productions were almost always done in a grave and gloomy style but they concerned themselves in actual representation of contemporary life and consequently contributed to the making of a national art.

3. Classical Painters

a. *Poussin*

Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665) eked out a precarious existence as a painter in Paris until he was about thirty years of age, at which time he managed to go to Rome. It was not from an ambition to be one of the many foreign art students assembled in the Eternal City that he struggled so hard to go there but because the antique made a strong appeal to him. This was a time when every year witnessed considerable contribution to the number of classical statues already rescued from heaps of ruins. Poussin lingered around them, making copies of each and studying to learn the secret of classical perfection.

During the first part of his residence in Rome, he was more or less under the influence of Guido Reni. His first important commission, *The Death of Germanicus,* is illustrative of this stage of his development. Afterwards, Salvator Rosa exercised some influence over him. In 1640 Louis XIII invited him to come to Paris, where he was instated in the royal palace. However, Poussin found the rigidity of Court ceremonies irksome and quite as distasteful to him were the petty jealousies of French artists, who resented his secure position with the king. After two years spent in the atmosphere of French intrigue, he was thankful to return to Rome, where he passed the remainder of his life.

It was in this latter part of his career that Poussin did his best work. The influence of Raphael is sometimes discoverable in his pictures. Especially he studied the biblical illustrations which adorn the Loggia; it was here, rather than in the Stanze, that he sought inspiration.

Poussin was a master at balanced composition. His arrangement was never left to chance. He wanted to revive classical scenes for an age that valued them greatly. Such themes as Diogenes casting away his bowl when he saw a peasant drinking from his hand; the momentary reunion of Orpheus and Eurydice—subjects of this classical type attracted him.

Hourticq says, "It was in the work of Poussin that the French classical genius first awoke to a conscious individuality." Speaking further of his painting, this critic observes: "Nothing in his works ever makes us feel the contact of reality; no accent reveals the joy of a painter in the contemplation of the beautiful. His study of antique statues has given him a taste for clearly-defined forms, simple planes, and rhythmic attitudes; his nymphs and satyrs have an elegance of form and attitude which implies a long plastic education. . . . His nature has no freshness, it is instinct with an austere majesty, untouched by any fantasy of light or colour. . . . An impression of serene eternity breathes from this balanced harmony."[1]

b. *Claude*

Because of the ever increasing number of foreigners who flocked to Rome to paint, it became customary to distinguish them by the name of their countries. This is why Claude Gellée is usually called Claude Lorraine.

Claude Gellée (1600-1682) did not come of an ancient family, as did Poussin. If tradition is to be trusted, he was once a cook, following the culinary art because it was said to be a sure passport to Rome. Having arrived at this art center, by whatever means, he became an attaché of an artist who promised to teach him to paint, and in course of time he mastered the technique of the art.

Claude is said to have painted impressions rather than objects. His landscapes were destined to exercise a lasting influence upon landscape painting in general. Despite Turner's jealousy of Claude's reputation, he owed him no slight debt.

While Claude found pleasure in classical ruins, which often have some part in his compositions, he was not educated in the classics, like Poussin, who read the wditings of the ancients continually and sought to see through their eyes.

"His landscapes deal with the soft splendour of southern skies. His dazzled eyes beheld a magic architecture. Sometimes it is a port; the sun, before disappearing into the ocean, darts its expiring rays caressingly on façades of

marble, and gilds the crests of innumerable little waves. Or it is a plain, and dark groves of trees make the illimitable distance lighter and more limpid. All the shade and solidity are in the foreground, near the edge of the frame; in the center of the picture, the objects become lighter as they recede, penetrated by the light and set ablaze as it were by the ardent atmosphere. These landscapes were lovingly contemplated; they have been copied and plagiarized extensively."[2]

Our age does not look upon classical remains with such awe and reverence as did seventeenth century Italy and France. It must be remembered that the laws which were supposed to have governed Greek drama were set relentlessly upon French playwrights of this period and the obligation to accept them assumed even by Molière. Since this age, when classical tenets set such arbitrary limits upon artistic expression in whatever field, men have broken wholly with the notion that we must adapt ourselves to antique laws of art. The Romanticists soon after claimed the right to express themselves, in which protest they were wholly justified.

Because of the progress which has been made in the last two centuries, the landscapes of these classical painters seem stilted and artificial to our eyes, and so they are, beyond doubt. It was due to individual qualities which Poussin and Claude contributed to their work rather than their devotion to the past which gave it lasting value. In studying their pictures, we are aware that such productions could not possibly have been produced by the classical artists whom they so highly revered and sought to emulate.

[1] Hourticq: *Art in France*, 106.
[2] Ibid., 210.

4. The Age of Louis XIV

Louis XIV succeeded his father as king of France when a young child. The government rested with the Queen-Mother, Anne of Austria, who fortunately had the wise guidance of Mazarin for some years. Louis XIV was king for more than seventy years and reigned in his own right for over half a century. From the beginning of this long period the power of the monarch was systematically and intentionally exalted. During his infancy the nobles had been disposed to lessen royal authority for their own advantage. This was never forgotten by the king and his advisors, who resolved to make him absolute. When Mazarin, who had served his mother so faithfully, knew that his end was near, he counseled Louis XIV to be a king indeed. Colbert continued and developed the same policy.

It was natural that art should feel the unifying effects of a state policy which was calculated to make everything subservient to the king and to magnify his dignity and importance. France was to be made the greatest state in Europe and her king the most exalted ruler. Not alone were political affairs shaped to this end, but it was expected that literature should relate the glories of the age, and that art in its manifold forms should lend itself to a similar purpose.

Not aware that art must be left unfettered, ambitious ones demanded that the Academy of Painting and Sculpture "evolve from the masterpieces of antiquity and of the Renaissance, the surest method of attaining beauty," and it was asked to prepare a manual for the guidance of painter and sculptor so that they might bring forth perfect art! Colbert founded the French Academy in Rome for the benefit of French art students, who were set to copying such masterpieces as were not to be purchased. So many antiques were sent out of the country to France that Italians remonstrated about it, disturbed that gold could deprive them of what was priceless.

The palace of the Louvre had been some time in the building and it was determined to complete it, although this

was not actually accomplished until the reign of Louis XV. However, it was at Versailles that the ambitions of the Sun King found expression. He would have a royal city outside the capital, for Paris engulfed him and made impossible the fullest expression of his majesty. So sumptuous a palace required the decoration of artists and the need of the hour directed painters away from Rome with her ruins to seventeenth century France. From 1670 until 1685 the resources of the country were heavily drained that the beauties of Versailles might appear. In order that none might ever know how great had been the cost of its construction, Louis XIV destroyed all records pertaining to the building of his imperial city.

In discussing the general characteristics of this period, which appear in art as in other cultural directions, Macfall says: "It was the reign of grandeur and high ambition. Louis the Fourteenth took the pose of demigod and France put on stiff brocade and the grand manner, took the heroic strut, and thought in continents. Louis looked at politics on a large scale; essayed to make Europe his footstool; worked for large results. Magnificence became the breath of the whole people. Life was looked upon as a majestic pageant; the grandiose was the sole aim—in politics, in manner, in conversation, in pose. There was no eye for small things. Houses were built as palaces. Rooms were large and splendid. Art had by consequence to be in the grand manner, or perish."

Charles Le Brun seemed to meet the requirements of Colbert, as he cast about to find the right artist to place in charge of his vast machinery which was to exalt the Sun King. Le Brun was a fine draughtsman and upon Poussin's return to Rome had accompanied him thither. There he remained four years. His popularity had been immediately established upon his return to Paris and in due time he became the director of the new Academy. Colbert had taken into account the perfection of Flemish tapestries and resolved that France should be able to produce some worthy of comparison. Consequently he enabled the Gobelin family to set up the manufacture of tapestries on an extensive scale. Always having an eye to strong organization

of every department, Colbert placed Le Brun in the directorship of this big establishment. He designed many series of tapestries which were woven here. Among these none are more celebrated than two series illustrative of the life of Alexander the Great, and of the Acts of the Apostles. It must be said that the tapestries woven in the Gobelin factories have been unsurpassed.

Le Brun had the gift of the decorator rather than the artist. His great compositions do not seem so attractive to us today as they appeared to his generation. He possessed some originality and inventive genius, but the very nature of his work excluded sincerity. His task was first of all to exalt his monarch and that in itself determined that his art must be laudatory rather than true. The Gallery of Apollo, in the Louvre, flattered the king, since he was subtly likened to the ancient divinity of the sun. Even the exploits of Alexander were set forth to imply some comparison between the great conqueror of antiquity and Louis XIV, who sought to aggrandize himself at the expense of other European states.

Louis XIV ennobled Le Brun, who became his painter-in-ordinary in 1662. In 1667 the artist accompanied the king on his Flemish campaign. His vogue continued little abated until the death of Colbert, in 1683. Thereupon Louvois succeeded the able minister and in lesser matters was permitted to have his way. He favored Mignard and the decade before the death of Le Brun, in 1690, was marked by sharp jealousies between the two painters, who divided sentiment in the Academy and out of it. After the death of Le Brun, the grandiose art which he had inaugurated quickly declined.

Pierre Mignard (1610-1695) was an excellent portraitist. He had spent over twenty years in Rome and received in consequence the nickname "le Romain"—Mignard the Roman. To his skill we are indebted for acquaintance with the features of many Court beauties, for some of the best known portraits of Louis XIV and for an acceptable one of Molière, who was his friend. Other painters who immortalized the brilliant circle that surrounded the Sun King

were Rigaud (1659-1743), Desportes (1661-1743), Lefebvre (1632-1675) and Largilliere (1656-1746).

The art of Louis XIV is characterized by its flamboyancy and its lavish use of gold. It was designed to be ostentatious. However, French taste kept it from vulgarity and extravagance.

5. The Eighteenth Century

"The king is dead! Long live the king!" It is difficult to believe that this cry, awaited with mingled dread and expectancy, ever ushered in more radical changes in Court life than on the occasion of the passing of Louis XIV. The nobles were weary of the pretense and pomp and adulation which the aged monarch had demanded. So rigid had been the etiquette of the French Court that the king's own brother was required to remain standing in the royal presence. Formality had become a burden; dignity and gravity had palled upon society. Courtiers and ladies longed for freedom and gaiety and the joy of life.

The infant grandson of Louis XIV was crowned as Louis XV. He was only five years of age and a long regency was expected. This happened to be followed by another long reign. The changes that occurred under the regency of the Duke of Orleans, the new spirit that now animated the aristocrats—chief patrons of art—were reflected in painting.

To be sure, art was no longer exclusively a royal appendage. In Paris the annual exhibitions held by the Academy had resulted in the growth of a considerable number of art-lovers, who praised and censured aspirant artists. The formation of various art circles made it impossible for painting ever again to become exclusively the interest of kings. None the less, in eighteenth century France, as in the years before, painters were employed to make beautiful châteaus of the nobles, who were satellites of the Court and governed largely by the standards set by the monarch. There were, of course, prosperous members of the Third Estate who purchased pictures for their homes and these steadily increased in number. Chardin ministered especially to them.

The finest exponent of the Regency spirit was Watteau, a painter of Flemish origin. He was powerfully influenced by the work of Rubens, which adorned the Palace of the Luxembourg, having been executed by the master under the patronage of Marie de' Medici, as we have seen.

Some day, some penetrating mind, capable of understanding the viewpoint of others, may present a study of such rare souls as Keats and Watteau, both condemned in early years to a premature offtaking, both racked with a fatal malady, both seeking to protect themselves from the misery of their plight by dwelling in worlds of the imagination, half revealed to mankind through their poetry and painting. One produced poetry in verse, the other produced it in color; one created word pictures, the other created poems on canvas. In contemplating Watteau's exquisite productions it is well for us to try to forget, as he did, the morose man who conceived them—restless, irritable, silent, a difficult friend, ungenial, yet apparently haunted by beauty and loveliness, by the desire for love and for happy human relationships.

Watteau's father was a tile maker who expected his son to learn the carpenter's trade. The lad finally managed to enter the studio of an indifferent painter and afterward went to Paris, where he roamed the streets penniless. His struggle with poverty could probably be paralleled by plenty of examples in the attics of Paris today, or perhaps in New York. After working for a dealer who turned out pictures wholesale for country trade, keeping a corps of ill-paid boys around him, one to paint sky, another trees, a third figures and so on, Watteau attracted the attention of a conscientious artist, under whose care he developed rapidly.

When his first pictures were shown at the annual exhibition, they won immediate attention and as soon as their creator was discovered, Watteau was invited to become a member of the Academy. His entrance picture, a requisite for full membership, was delayed from year to year until the Academy gave him only one more month in which to produce it. Thereupon the artist dashed off his *Embarkation for Cythera,* one of his masterpieces.

Jean Antoine Watteau (1684-1721) was the painter par excellence of the "fêtes galantes." These express the spirit which animated nobles who were possessed of wealth and leisure under the Regency. As a matter of fact, this spirit had already manifested itself before the death of the Sun King, and the major portion of Watteau's work was

done before the coronation of Louis XV. The new art, expressive of a gayer existence, less reflective, not in the least academic, was now greatly in demand. People feared only boredom. Watteau painted a dream world wherein lovers whiled away their time along the banks of rivers, among shady groves, where the elaborate costumes of the ladies vied in color with the flowers. Nothing was taken seriously. Love without passion was the order of the day. There was no sorrow or sighing; peace reigned supreme and to be gallant, gracious and happy was encumbent upon all.

"Watteau worked for operatic decorators, and his most delicate reveries seem to have been evoked by a graceful minuet in some fairy play. The actors he loved do not play the heroic parts of tragedy; they do not declaim pathetic sentiments in the midst of classic palaces; they sometimes wear the costumes of the actors of the Italian theatre, but more often dresses invented by the painter, and like those of his period, admirably designed to display the elegant ease of his little figures. . . . These vivacious attitudes, these glittering broken folds are relieved against the velvety shade of trees, or the faint blue of distant horizons. The sudden flashes of satin are subdued to some extent by the mystery of the landscape, as are the whisperings of lovers by the majestic silence of evening.

"Watteau's little world is all his own. His operatic parks bear no resemblance to historical landscapes, and it is amazing to see how little his small figures have in common with those of the Academy."[1]

He was a difficult artist to imitate, this painter of a soul's dream. Those who best succeeded in carrying along the idea of the "fêtes galantes" were Nicholas Lancret (1690-1743) and Jean Baptiste Pater (1695-1736).

During the reign of Louis XV, Francois Boucher (1703-1770) filled a position comparable to that held by Le Brun under Louis XIV. He made numerous designs for the factory of the Gobelins and did much decorative work.

Boucher was a pupil of Le Moyne. To him, classical characters were only material from which to compose his compositions. He painted Venus again and again, in every

pose and posture; however, this was but an excuse for depicting the nude female form. His beguiling cupids appeared in throngs.

Boucher's art is typical of the Rococo period. This word, so constantly employed in discussions of art of this period is supposed to be derived from *rocaille,* meaning rock-work and referring to artificially constructed grottos which were popular at the time. Thus the term "Rococo" carries with it a sense of artificiality.

Fragonard, a pupil of Boucher, was the last conspicuous example of this style. Fragonard (1732-1806) came from Provence and was greatly influenced by Rubens.

The mutterings of the terrific storm, which had long been threatening, grew more clear and certain during those few years wherein Louis XVI and his young queen played at statescraft. Greuze (1725-1805), the so-called "melodramatic painter," is associated with this period and with the latter reign of Louis XV. Greuze belonged to an age that had lost account of sincerity. He continually overshot the mark. Aiming at preachments in art, a purpose not unlike that which animated Hogarth in England, he was not content to tell his story moderately; he must ever exaggerate. He pictures an artless maiden, plunged into grief because she has broken a water-jug. A parent is shown amid affectionate offspring, whose caresses, as has been well said, would actually have snuffed out his life. *A Son Chastened* portrays a family circle in tragic grief, the penitent son returning home to find his father a corpse.

Some mention should be made of the portraitists of this century. La Tour (1704-1788) portrayed his subjects as he saw them. His renderings of some of the royal favorites must have given them twinges of conscience and a sense of dismay. Nattier (1685-1766), on the other hand, painted them as they liked to appear. Never has painter been more tactful in depicting his sitters than Nattier. What they would fain conceal, he would not be guilty of disclosing.

Elizabeth Vigée (1755-1842) was the daughter of an indifferent painter. She early displayed a rare ability to paint portraits. A shrewd picture dealer married her secretly to gain the benefit of her earnings. This marriage

cost her much unhappiness, but it resulted in the birth of a little daughter upon whom she poured out her love. She is remembered for tender pictures of herself and child.

Happening to come to the notice of Marie Antoinette, born the same year as she, Vigée-LeBrun soon obtained more commissions than she could execute. Sitters were obliged to wait their turns for months. This popularity, however, was short-lived, for she became so identified with the friends of the unhappy Queen that she had to flee from the terrors of the Revolution. Turning to Italy, her fame had gone before and she was kept occupied with her art. Later, when the sad fate of her early royal patroness became known, she went to Austria and then to Russia, where she painted the children of the Empress Catherine.

Vigée-LeBrun belonged to a sentimental age and her work bespeaks its artificiality. She looked merely upon the surface and set her subjects upon canvas in all their social splendor and elegance. Her work has an historical as well as an artistic value, or, to speak more truly, it has historical rather than artistic value. Yet who would forego those charming portraits of Marie Antoinette and her ill-fated children? It is sad to remember that this gifted woman lost the love of her daughter by opposing her marriage to a Russian diplomat of trifling character.

It remains to speak of Chardin, one of the greatest painters of all time. He was swayed by Dutch artists and assimilated the Dutch *genre* picture until he made it his own.

Jean Baptiste Chardin (1699-1779) belonged to the lower middle class and it was here that his interest and observation lay. Never was artist more lacking in pretense. He did not aspire to depict Court beauties nor to paint the life of the *noblesse,* of which he knew nothing. Instead, he confined himself to the simple people, whose quiet lives he understood. It has been said that, were one to judge by his pictures, his people never knew a significant moment in their lives. Beginning as a painter of still-life, he gradually turned to "inhabited interiors," wherein a mother pauses for the blessing before giving her children their porridge. Brass kettles shine; the lustre of pewter,

the crispness of a carrot, the skin of an onion—everyday concerns of life seemed to him worthy of painstaking and care. He was the first French artist to use paint in patches in such way that from a necessary distance an impression of unity and harmony is conveyed. Nineteenth century painters gave close heed to Chardin's technique.

"Chardin challenges rivalry with the Dutch, and wins to the supreme rank in his endeavor. He, like them, was of the people, and uttered his art for the people. Into that art no alien lisp ever enters. He does not hymn his whole age; but he utters the life of that part of the people from whom he came. It is only bookish criticism that seeks to raise Chardin by flinging contempt on the art of Boucher and Fragonard. He could not and did not touch the lyre they tuned and played with astonishing genius. He knew nothing of the upper classes of France and cared nothing. He wrought the spirit of the age as they wrought it, with wondrous genius; but he took for his field of vision a different realm of that people. His utterance is wholly incomplete without theirs—theirs incomplete without his. His vision for values was intense and has never been surpassed; his sense of color was masterly. . . .

"Chardin went to life; and, like the poet he was, he essayed to utter life as he felt it, in the lowly home where he saw it, with all that power that he had been granted. His senses felt the wizardry of the wondrous mystery; and his hand's skill wrought it with consummate exquisiteness of touch, so that today he stands amongst the immortals. . . . He learned much of his art from Watteau, and in his own realm he bettered his instruction."[2]

[1] Hourticq: *Art in France*, 254.
[2] Macfall: *History of Painting*, VI, 162, ff.

6. Painting of the Revolution and Directory

We have seen that classical art came to France through Italians, brought thither by Francis I, and the Fontainebleau School resulted from their work. Again, a second classical régime was established by Poussin and Claude. A third period wherein the art of antiquity exerted its perennial charm was co-incident with the discovery of Pompeian ruins, in the latter part of the eighteenth century. It is difficult for us to realize today, after the remarkable discoveries of the excavator, how tremendous an impression was made upon the thought of Europe when that resort favored by wealthy Romans was revealed by the spade and made it possible for men to see how the ancients had actually lived.

The theory was advanced that the Greeks had discovered once and for all the true principles of art; all moderns had to do was to investigate these principles and absorb them. Beyond the achievements of the classical period it was impossible to go. Consequently, it devolved upon artists to study the past and emulate the art of Græco-Rome.

Such conceptions threatened the very life of French art and, as a matter of fact, it was all but stifled under the unnatural restraints set upon it by academic critics.

Most prominent of the exponents of the new classicism was David, who painted before the advent of Napoleon but who is most frequently remembered for his *Coronation of Josephine as Empress of France.*

Louis David (1748-1825) claimed to derive his inspiration from nature but, as has been observed, he meant nature as interpreted by the Hellenes. His paintings have little to do with action. "His heroes pose but never act."

It was irksome to David that he could not hold exclusively to themes suggested by Latin tradition. Instead, he was commissioned to paint the *Tennis Court Oath,* and scenes associated with the Revolution.

David was not only a painter. He was in the very midst of the stirring events which followed the downfall of royalty during the Revolution. He was instrumental in

demolishing the hall of the Royal Academy—the "Bastille of Painting," as the Revolutionists termed it. No pen flowed more easily than his in signing death warrants but when his own turn came, with the end of Robespierre, he forgot to study royalty in its courage to meet death. David was terrified to find himself incarcerated; yet, during the months he was imprisoned, he continued to paint.

He enjoyed the patronage of Napoleon after his release, but this was of short duration. Having compromised himself by declaring against the return of the Bourbons to power, he was obliged to escape to Belgium, where his last days were spent.

David is no longer a favorite. His stiff, unnatural poses do not please the twentieth century. The principles that he enunciated and the methods that he employed have lost their power to charm.

One painter of this period was able by innate ability to retain his individuality, despite the reign of classicism. He was gifted enough to find its tenets no handicap. This was Jean Auguste Ingres (1778-1867). However, he belongs to a somewhat later period and was influenced more by Italian primitives than by the Greeks.

FONTAINEBLEAU

By Dimier

WHAT follows will serve to gauge the degree of importance to which, in this new period of his life, Primaticcio was raised, and the favour with which he was honoured by the King of France. The choice that was made of him to undertake the journey to Rome marked the dawn of it. The manner in which he acquitted himself must naturally have added to his credit; and soon we find him passing into the front rank in all the enterprises in which the king was then encouraging all the arts at once. He was entrusted with the management of the foundry; and a tapestry loom, which Francis I set up about that time in his palace, was ordered to weave the designs he presented. At the same time he was making drawings for the Limoges enamellers. In short, his position at the court of the Valois was thenceforth more a general supervision and direction of all the bodies of craftsmen than the simple post of painter to the king, corresponding, in its own day, to that of Lebrun under Louis XIV.

He had the title of Groom of the Chamber to the King, and, from 1544, enjoyed the revenues of the Abbey of St. Martin in Troyes, from which for the future he took his name in place of that of Bologna, by which he had been called hitherto on account of his native town. Vasari says of him, as of Rosso, that he kept at court the retinue of a nobleman, a testimony to the brilliant fortune with which the king rewarded his many services. . . .

Henri II's reign saw the completion of the Ulysses Gallery and the entire painting of the Ball-room, which were Primaticcio's two most important works at Fontainebleau. The same reign saw the arrival in France of the famous Niccolo dell' Abbate of Modena, called Messer Niccolo, who is celebrated in the history of art for his collaboration with Primaticcio, and was the third of the Italian painters of importance whom the patronage of the Valois had induced to settle in France. . . .

The Ulysses Gallery, now demolished, stood in the court of the White Horse, which it adjoined on one side, while on the other it looked over the Garden of Pine-trees. It was one of the first things to be built, and remained without decoration for ten years. Only after the death of Rosso was the decoration of it first considered. Primaticcio was charged with the work, and put all his most skilful workmen on the task. In so glorious a task he appears to have wished to work entirely in his own way, and he abandoned the mixture of stucco and painting which Rosso and himself also had adopted in several places. The relief was less and the ornament smaller. On this ceiling, beside the historical paintings, was scattered a profusion of ornament, painted in a style which had not been seen before in France, and which, twenty years later, was fashionable in Italy under the name of grotesque. . . .

To get a proper idea of the total effect of the Ulysses Gallery we must imagine a breadth about equal to that of the gallery of Francois I and a completely disproportionate length. It ran the whole length of the court of the White Horse, nearly 150 yards; and was therefore less a single whole, consisting of mutually supporting and homogeneous parts, than a succession of fifteen bays, each decorated independently, and meant to be looked at separately. These bays were divided on the ceiling, according to eight different systems, by pictures varying in number from five to nine, with the exception of that of the centre bay, which had only three. This was divided on a unique system; that of the others was symmetrically repeated up to either end. Such was the vast and magnificent frame which was to contain ninety-eight mythological paintings in the divisions of the ceiling, besides the fifty-eight scenes from the history of Ulysses on the walls.

The following is the list, with an indication of what drawings of them are preserved.

On the walls: the embarkment of the Greeks after the siege of Troy, Ulysses offering sacrifice (both drawings in the museum at Stockholm); Neptune rousing the tempest against Ulysses (drawing at Chantilly); Ulysses defeated by the Cicones; Ulysses with the Lotophagi, Ulysses with

the Cyclops (drawings of both at Stockholm); the return of Agamemnon; the murder of Agamemnon and of Cassandra, Polyphemus keeping his flocks (drawings of both at Stockholm); Ulysses putting out the giant's eye; Ulysses and his companions escaping from the cave of Polyphemus hidden under the bellies of the sheep (drawings at Stockholm); Polyphemus throwing rocks at Ulysses; Ulysses receiving from Æolus the bag of the winds; the ship of Ulysses driven on by the Zephyrs; the companions of Ulysses opening the bag of winds; Ulysses with the Laestrigones; Ulysses landing on Circe's island; Ulysses protected from Circe's charm; Ulysses leaving Circe; the arrival of Ulysses in Hades; Ulysses sacrificing the black rams (drawing in the Albertina collection at Vienna); Tiresias drinking in the victim's blood; Ulysses talking with Hercules in Hades; Ulysses burning the body of Elpenor; Ulysses and the Sirens, the companions of Ulysses and the oxen of the sun (drawings of both in the Albertina collection at Vienna); Ulysses torn from the arms of Calypso by Mercury; Ulysses taking leave of Alcinous (drawing at Stockholm); Ulysses carried asleep into his own country; Minerva waking Ulysses; Minerva appearing to Ulysses in the guise of Telemachus; Ulysses talking with Eumæus; Ulysses recognised by his dog; Ulysses receiving alms from one of his servants; Ulysses begging at the door of his house, the combat of Ulysses with the beggar Irus (drawings of both at Stockholm); Minerva urging Ulysses to demand the bow; Ulysses drawing the bow (drawing at Stockholm); Antinous shot by Ulysses (drawing in the Albertina); Ulysses revenged on the suitors; the handmaids condemned to death by Ulysses, Ulysses washing his hands (drawings of both at Stockholm); Euryclea telling the men-servants of the return of Ulysses; Ulysses disguised by Minerva, Penelope and Ulysses embracing (drawings of both at Stockholm); Ulysses and Penelope in bed; Ulysses in bed recounting his adventures. . . .

We now come to the paintings on the ceiling. Right in the middle was the Dance of the Hours, painted in an oval; accompanied by two oblongs representing Apollo and the

Muses on Parnassus, and a Feast of the Gods. These three pieces formed the central compartment, on either side of which the divisions of the ceiling were repeated symmetrically. The two adjoining compartments, the seventh and the ninth bays of the gallery, had a hexagon in the centre accompanied by eight other compositions, four in medallion. These were Apollo in the sign of Leo; then Orpheus, Latonia with Diana and Apollo, Diana and Pan, Aesculapius; Diana entreated by Niobe, Apollo slaying the Python, Apollo and Diana slaying the children of Niobe, Io guarded by Argus. . . .

The arrangement of the Ball-room, which was painted between 1551 and 1556 is very different, as we may still see on the spot, for this Ball-room has survived. It is known nowadays as the gallery of Henri II. It is not a gallery, in fact, but a room, of extraordinary dimensions, a royal hall, where balls were held, and all the other court entertainments. . . .

If it were not for the Ulysses Gallery, the Ball-room would be the most important work which Primaticcio carried out at Fontainebleau. And it is true that if it yields to the former in the number of paintings, it surpasses it by far in size. . . .

The Ball-room was long the admiration of all visitors to Fontainebleau. They looked without ceasing at the crowd of mythological figures, the chief of which were seen to be painted on brackets originally intended to receive a vaulted roof, though the design was altered. Here was Ceres symbolizing summer, surrounded by reapers, and autumn under the emblem of Bacchus. He appeared at table, raising his cup with a movement full of indolence and abandon. Ariadne was seated opposite him, and all round them Fauns and Satyrs filled the scene with voluptuous intoxication; two figures of men in the foreground were leading lions and leopards. Activity, effort, and heavy labour were contrasted in the other picture with this painting of pleasure. The whole scene was crowded round Ceres. Clothed in long working garments, women were cutting the sheaves, which young men were piling into bundles on their shoulders. One of them was carrying a

sack, and reaching out his arm so naturally that he might almost be seen to bend under his burden. But the finest of all were two large figures seated at the foot of the arcades, drawn with a light and flowing touch, and completing this scene of rural labour. Near to Bacchus was Apollo enthroned upon Parnassus and surrounded by the Muses, while opposite was Venus constraining Vulcan to forge darts for Cupid. There Primaticcio had painted the bellows of the forge and all the poetic accessories with striking simplicity. Further on Phaeton was supplicating the god of the sun; and on the other side were three goddesses dancing before the assembled gods. Below came the story of Philemon and Baucis, and Discord on the way to embroil the gods. . . .

The decoration of Fontainebleau, which had been all but completed in the space of sixteen years, no longer afforded scope for the variety of application and the constant growth of initiative which had been witnessed in the former period. The display of excessive magnificence, the profusion, the splendour, the expenditure which the late king took delight in, could not be kept up after him. And moreover, Fontainebleau, though not abandoned, ceased to hold the first place in the royal predilection. The favorite residence of Francis I saw its prestige diminish under his son. The new king preferred above all other spots Anet, the property of Diane de Poitiers, his favorite. Finally, a new style of decoration came into favour, in which the paintings of other days were replaced by carved panelling and marble chimney-pieces ornamented by Philibert Delorme with pilasters and other divisions, according as the architects invented them. . . . Niccolo survived Primaticcio only one year. Primaticcio died between the 2nd March and the 14th September 1570. His rival and collaborator followed him in 1571. With Niccolo's death came the extinction of the line of the great Italian artists of Fontainebleau, whose glorious history Rosso had opened forty years before. A year later, again, Francois Clouet died, and the followed, in another realm, the momentary eclipse of the arts which France had been maintaining."

Dimier: *French Painting in the XVI Century.*

V

SPANISH PAINTING

1. Backgrounds

THE fine arts developed slowly in Spain, due to conditions prevailing in the peninsula. At a time when painting had reached a high stage of development in Italy and in Flanders, the Spanish people were still engaged in a desperate struggle to rid their land of an alien race. Indeed, we may go further and say that at no time has painting been the characteristic art of Spain. There are, to be sure, a few imperishable names inseparably linked with Spanish painting—El Greco, born in Crete and Spanish only by adoption; Velasquez, Murillo, Goya. If Ribera be added, whom then do we miss of the foremost exponents of this art?

In his *Soul of Spain,* Ellis writes: "Spain has never been a painter's paradise. . . . There has never been a time when Spanish painting was really comparable to what, at one time or another, Flemish, Tuscan, Venetian, Dutch and French painting have been. The dominant note of the Spanish temperament, even when Spain was a great world-power, was always *character.* . . . The inspiration of art usually came to Spain from outside. Keenly alive as he was to the subtlest mysteries of religion, the Spaniard disdained the refinements of artistic delicacy; he instinctively preferred a vigorous, masculine, realistic grasp of things, even of spiritual things. Spain is not the land of great art but of great personalities, and Velasquez towers as much above his fellow-painters as Cervantes above his fellow-novelists."[1]

Drama proved itself to be the characteristic expression of the Spanish, so far as the fine arts are concerned. The very qualities that brought painting to such perfection in Italy, such as inventiveness, curiosity, mental alertness, and the urge to master problems inherent in the art. were

largely absent in Renaissance Spain. The very fiber of the people explains in a measure their slight accomplishment in painting and some understanding of their national growth is necessary before one is ready to approach the subject at all.

The population of the peninsula is highly composite. In the first place, we have the Iberian stock subdued by the Romans and more or less Latinized. The Vandals pressed into Spain in the fourth century, our era, to be displaced within twenty-five years by the Visigoths, who ruled the land for generations after. In the eighth century, their supremacy was ended by invading Saracens.

It will be remembered that after the death of Mohammed, the Saracens set forth on a campaign of conquest, winning northern Africa in a remarkably short time. They next crossed into Spain, overcame the Visigoths, forcing such remnants of Christians as survived the struggle of their invasion into mountain retreats of the Pyrenees. Then the invaders pushed into France where Charles Martel defeated them on the field of Tours, saving western civilization for Europe.

Gradually, little bands of Christian refugees rallied under their leaders and founded settlements that grew into petty states in northern Spain, too insignificant to awaken alarm on the part of the invaders. One generation inspired the next to attempt to win back the lost heritage. Territory was regained foot by foot, and the determination deepened into a passion to repulse the Moors.

It should never be supposed that this desire swayed every age with like intensity. There were long periods wherein Christians and Mohammedans dwelt side by side in comparative peace. It not infrequently happened that Christians served the Moors in their military campaigns. Yet, the firm hope of ridding the land of the intruder was never abandoned and the gains of each century gave encouragement to oncoming generations. Spanish literature became permeated with this struggle and Spanish ballads sang of the courage of military chiefs and the prowess of the soldier.

As time went on, the several independent Christian states became merged into two: Aragon and Castile. These, with Granada, the stronghold of the Moors, and Portugal, long incorporated with Castile, comprised the country we know as Spain. By the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, in 1469, the crowns of Aragon and Castile were united, and thenceforth these most Christian sovereigns combined to force the Moors into Africa, whence their ancestors had come more than seven hundred years before. So was the population of the peninsula brought finally under one government, which proved to be an entirely different matter from welding it into a united nation. Time alone could work that miracle.

It is plain that so long as an entire country was consecrated to a military cause, conditions would be unfavorable to the growth of art, which is a product of peace. However, the same year that saw the final expulsion of the Moors—or their absorption into the Spanish population—witnessed the great discovery that brought a new hemisphere to the attention of Europe. Spain led the way in discovery and, as a result of her wide conquests and of the gold that was poured into her coffers, her power became supreme.

The meteoric rise of Spain to supremacy is one of the remarkable events of modern history; however, her period of dominance was brief. There were inherent causes for the decline which overtook her even while she stood at the zenith of her greatness.

We are here concerned with her political affairs only as they affected painting, but it was inevitable that conquest and the rapid accumulation of wealth should give impetus to the fine arts. Philip began the construction of a royal palace, known as the Escorial. The need of artists and painters was sure to follow.

[1] Ellis: *The Soul of Spain*, 106.

2. Spanish Primitives

Foreign painters had visited Spain long before this. In 1378 Starnina, to whom reference has been made in connection with Italian art,[a] went to Spain and was well received at the Court of Castile. He did much work for the king, Juan I, and when he returned to Italy after ten years spent in Castile, he was possessed of wealth. It will be remembered that Masolino was one of his pupils. Dello of Florence, of the school of Giotto, was another fourteenth century painter who went to Spain. Others followed who decorated churches with frescoes after the manner of the Italians. Their work has almost entirely perished or has lost its value through restorations.

Flemish influence predominated during the fifteenth century. By the marriage of Mary of Burgundy to one of the Hapsburgs, the Northern Provinces came eventually under Spanish rule. So long as the Hapsburgs reigned, art was fostered and encouraged.

In the year 1428 Jan van Eyck went to Portugal to paint the portrait of the Princess Isabella, whose hand was sought in marriage by Philip the Good of Burgundy. Later Van Eyck visited Spain, where his influence was felt for fully an hundred years after. Flemish pictures were much in demand thereafter and itinerant painters from Flanders penetrated to many parts of the peninsula.

Three schools of native art arose in Spain, the Andalusian School, centering in Seville; the Castilian School, centering in Toledo, afterwards to be merged in the School of Madrid; and the Valencian School, the sea-port town of Valencia looking toward Italy and strongly affected by southern influences.

Juan Sanchez de Castro is usually regarded as the founder of the so-called Andalusian School of painting. His active period fell in the latter part of the fifteenth century. His work shows most of the weaknesses of Flemish art and indicates his debt to it. His pupil, Juan Nuñez, is important among the primitives of Seville.

Greater than either of these was Alejo Fernandez, of the Moorish city of Cordova. He went to Seville in 1508 and there much of his work is still preserved.

"The Northern manner is still in the ascendency, but the paintings of Fernandez are rendered with a vein of quiet dignity which makes them something more than a reproduction of the methods of the Flemish masters. While they retain the simplicity which characterises the Gothic pictures, they exhibit a dramatic force and an element of truthful seriousness verging towards gloom, two distinctive features of the Spanish school."[1]

Painters of the Castilian School were swayed by both Flemish and Italian influences. Fernando Gallegos, called the "Van Eyck of the peninsula," was a native of Salamanca. His work is conspicuous among the productions of the Castilian school. Antonio Rincon, painter-in-ordinary to the king, executed fine portraits of Ferdinand and Isabella. Italian tendencies appear in his style.

The Valencian School produced no outstanding painter during the fifteenth century. The relations of Valencia with Naples were close and it was inevitable that Italian paintings should be favored and Italian artists well received there.

It is not too much to say that the Spanish primitives are important to the special student only. The general traveler, accustomed to the beauty of the Italian schools and the rugged sincerity of Flemish masters, is almost certain to be repelled by the early native paintings of Spain. None the less, those qualities which set Spanish painting apart from that of other countries are to be seen in the early work and he who would fully understand the achievements of the Golden Age cannot afford to pass them by unnoticed.

[1] Gallichan: *Spanish Painting*, 34.

3. The Spanish Temperament

The Visigothic element entered largely into the fiber of the Spanish nation. The Visigoths were a gloomy, melancholy folk, possessed of inordinate pride. This caused them to fight fiercely and gave them an arrogant bearing. Even after they had left their dark forests and settled in sunny Spain, their gloom remained. Nor had they imagination, which distinguishes the Celt. As a result, we find an absence of fancy which often transforms the obvious and makes it less objectionable.

Long centuries wherein the prevailing idea had been to drive out men of another faith had made the Spanish narrow and bigoted. Crown and church were accepted without question. Instead of a Luther, challenging the authority of an ecclesiastical system, Spain had a Loyola, organizing his military order to crush out heresy. The institution of the Inquisition gained a hold here that was unparalleled elsewhere. Its system of espionage set neighbor against neighbor and engendered the rank poison of suspicion among men. While in other countries the Inquisition was the instrument of the church, Spanish sovereigns soon learned its convenience in affairs of state and joined forces with ecclesiastical authority. As a consequence, the spirit of the people was crushed. Initiative disappeared at home while the more valiant spirits betook themselves across the seas.

Spain has well been called the land of paradox. While Spanish explorers were braving every danger to conquer new regions for the king, the people at home were submitting without a struggle to tyranny which extended to the minutiæ of life. Art suffered grievously by the restrictions placed upon it. The Inquisition appointed an official to inspect all religious paintings. One painter was thrown into prison for representing the Mother Mary with embroidery on her petticoat. It was forbidden to place her on canvas with uncovered feet. The nude was prohibited in all sacred art. The height of the cross borne by Christ, its width, the very number of nails to be shown in it, were matters of canonical ruling. The attitude of sacred per-

sonages, the robes to be worn by them, all such details were established and departure from these regulations was accounted heresy, for which fair trial was unknown in Spain.

It was Francisco Pacheco, official inspector of religious pictures, who wrote: "The chief end of Christian art is to lead men to piety and bring them to God." The physical features of the country itself reacted upon men in such a way as to inspire fear and turn them to the mystical aspects of religion. Centuries of cruelty and intermittent bloodshed had made them callous to suffering. Church paintings were designed to make the people submissive to the teachings of the priesthood. The ascetic life was held before them as noblest and most worthy of emulation.

"The Crucifixion and scenes of martyrdom and asceticism were multiplied, and always with a literal exposition of the horrors of the incident. Blood and wounds and exhibitions of excessive emotion, whether of fury, anguish or patient submission, were relied upon to strengthen the faith and kindle the devotion of the people."[1]

The cold, proud reserve, so characteristic of the Spanish people, is seen in their painting. Somberness prevails rather than gaiety. An absence of imaginative invention, poetical perception, fine feeling and a readiness to picture forth the horrible are found. The Greek message of beauty did not reach to Spain, for she was Latinized after it had been lost by the Romans, if, indeed, it was ever deeply felt by them.

It is essential to keep continually before us the growth of Spanish nationality. Hundreds of years of struggle left their ineffaceable mark. "The pictures of Spain tell the story of Spain. The two cannot be severed the one from the other. Spanish artists have seized the racial characteristics and left them imprinted upon their canvases. All the entangled diversities that have combined to produce the Spain of today may be found embodied in the history of Spanish art."[2]

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[1] DeForest: *History of Art*, 393.
[2] Gallichan, 1.

4. Italian Mannerists

We have observed that Italian influences reached Spain in the fourteenth century when Starnina took refuge in Castile after being exiled from his native land. Moreover, a follower of Giotto, in the same period, carried the tenets of his teacher thither. However, the internal conditions were such that native art received little impetus at this time.

In the fifteenth century realistic art was fostered by Flemish masters. The visit of Jan van Eyck was productive of results and many Spanish painters were induced to spend years of study in Flanders. Itinerant artists from Antwerp and other Flemish centers journeyed through Spain and filled commissions offered them by churches and religious houses.

During the sixteenth century, the political situation was altered. Close relationship between Spain and Italy led to a consequent interchange of culture. Naples was won by Spain in 1504. In 1519 Charles II became king of Spain and few years later was elected Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, as Charles V. He was a great admirer of Italian art and so long as he lived he did his utmost to bring painters from Italy into Spain. This policy was adhered to by his son, Philip II. Due to the pronounced preference which they gave to foreign art, realistic painting, which had been stimulated by Flemish masters, gave way before a deluge of Italian work that flooded the country. Unhappily, the great days of Italian painting were already passed; consequently imitators fell upon evil times.

The outstanding enterprise undertaken by Philip II which was to bear much fruit for the future of Spanish art was the construction of a huge edifice known as the Escorial. This building was begun in 1562 and continued in the making for twenty years. The gigantic task served as an outlet in the gloomy life of the Spanish king, relieving the nervous strain caused by religious controversies and the repeated loss of valuable territories.

In his will, Emperor Charles V had enjoined his son to erect a suitable mausoleum for Spanish royalty. Again, on

the sixteenth of August, 1557, the Spanish army had defeated the French at St. Quentin. In order to invest the town, it had proved unavoidable to destroy a monastery. This troubled the king, who was as superstitious as he was devout. The monastery being dedicated to St. Lawrence, Philip II vowed to raise a much costlier shrine to the saint. Finally, he wished to build a new palace, worthy of his Most Christian Majesty.

It occurred to him to build a pile sufficiently large to serve all these needs. It should include the royal mausoleum, the monastery, with its adjoining church, and it should contain the palace, as well. It was begun with Juan Baptiste of Toledo as architect; he died within a year and his pupil, Juan de Herrera continued the work. Yet is was really Philip II who conceived the plan and these men merely reduced his ideas to working proportions.

The walls of this great building, 744 by 580, rise bleak and bare. The site is nearly thirty miles north-west of Madrid, in a lonely spot, against bare mountains. There is a tradition that St. Lawrence was put to death by being burned on a gridiron. It suited Philip II to attempt, in so far as he was able, to perpetuate this gruesome martyrdom in stone. The king continually brooded over death in its morbid aspects and found delight in planning his tomb. It has been said that he conceived of himself as greater when entombed than living; his thoughts "turned perpetually graveward."

As a matter of fact, the Escorial proved not only a mausoleum for Philip II when dead; it was his tomb while yet he lived. His private suite admitted him by a concealed entrance to the church, built over the crypt, where the monks said mass. Thither, unseen and unnoted, he came at will. His apartments did not open to the light of day but to the gloom of this chapel and the great tomblike building has been likened in size and purpose to the Great Pyramid.

The king was ambitious to have the walls of palace and church decorated by gifted artists. Failing in his attempt to secure those of established reputation, he accepted

the services of imitators and it is pathetic to read of their vain efforts to please him. One after another was paid, dismissed and asked to leave the country. Their rapidity of execution caused the Spanish to marvel; by their speed only did they awaken astonishment.

The popularity of the Italian style prompted many an ambitious Spaniard to go to Rome to study art. There he fell under the spell of such men as Vasari and learned the methods of the Italians without comprehending their meaning. It is safe to say that few if any of these imitators really comprehended the message of the Italian masters; they strove merely to ape their devices. Carducci alone, of all the mannerists who painted in the Escorial, seems to have been sincere and conscientious in his work. Such remnants of these frescoes as survive bespeak the decadent spirit of the times.

One native painter was summoned to the Escorial: Luis de Morales (1509-1586). His early work shows him at his best. His religious pictures depict the austerity of the Spanish faith and give indication of originality and truth. Called to work for the king, he painted one picture which was sent to an outlying monastery; then he was allowed to go his way. His *Ecce Homo* and *Mater Dolorosa* are most frequently reproduced.

There is a story that Philip II came upon him in later years, when he was very poor and neglected, whereupon the king, in a generous moment, pensioned him for the remainder of his life—some five years.

Two checks were finally given to the wave of Italian imitation, which bid fair to destroy native talent. Antonio Moro, a Fleming, became Court painter to Philip II. Like most of his countrymen, he was never misled by appearances but sought for character. He is especially remembered for the portrait he made of Mary Tudor, neglected wife of the Spanish king. After Moro returned to Antwerp, his pupil, Alonso Coello, succeeded him at the Court, preserving Flemish standards.

The second check was given by the Venetians, who became known to the Spanish through numerous paintings by Titian and Tintoretto purchased by the Court and, above

all, through the work of El Greco, who was trained by these master colorists. Neglected for wellnigh three hundred years, El Greco is now recognized as the first great painter of the Spanish school.

5. The Golden Age of Spanish Painting

Whenever we come upon remarkable art periods, it behooves us to look for the path-finders, the innovators, who break with the old and see beyond their day and generation. In Italy we find Masaccio, in his short life setting the pendulum ahead and leaving men to ponder his accomplishment for generations. In Flanders, Hubert van Eyck served a similar purpose. In Spain, El Greco made ready the way for Velasquez, who comprehended fully what the older painter had seen in flashes.

a. *El Greco*

It is unfortunate that more has not been preserved to us concerning the life and character of one who is known today by a nickname—*El Greco*—the Greek. His own name was Dominicos Theotocopoulos, so perhaps it is not to be wondered that his contemporaries found a simpler appellation for him. The very year of his birth is uncertain, although it is believed on substantial authority that it must have been about 1547. He was born in Candia, on the island of Crete, "Mother of Greece," and fell heir to Byzantine-Cretan art foundations.

When quite young he went to Venice where he probably studied under Titian but showed closer affiliation with the conceptions and style of Tintoretto. In 1570 he visited Rome and in 1575, in all likelihood, went to Toledo, Spain, where his later life was spent.

El Greco married and had a gifted son, but biographers have sought in vain to discover further data regarding his personal life. He is known to have been of a violent, eccentric nature and there survives an illuminating passage by one Martinez, who lived somewhat later but had heard men speak who had known the artist. In Martinez's *Letters* he wrote the following, quoted by Calvert in his instructive discussion of El Greco:

"At that time, there came from Italy a painter called Dominico Greco; it is said that he was a pupil of Titian. He settled in the famous and ancient city of Toledo, introducing such an extravagant style that to this day nothing has been seen to equal it; attempting to discuss it would cause confusion in the soundest minds; his works being so dissimilar that they do not seem to be by the same hand. He came to this city with a high reputation, so much so that he gave it to be understood that there was nothing superior to his works. In truth, he achieved some works which are worthy of estimation, and which can be put amongst those of famous painters. His nature was extravagant like his painting. It is not known with certainty what he did with his works, as he used to say no price was high enough for them, and so he gave them in pledge to their owners who willingly advanced what he asked for. He earned many ducats, but spent them in too great pomp and display in his house, to the extent of keeping paid muscians to entertain him at meal-times. His works were many, but the only wealth he left were two hundred unfinished paintings; he reached an advanced age, always enjoying great fame. He was a famous architect, and very eloquent in his speeches. He had few disciples, as none cared to follow his capricious and extravagant style, which was only suitable for himself."[1]

Other testimony is not wanting that El Greco was a passionate man of uncertain temper. He was embroiled in two lawsuits and had one difference with the king. When interrogated in court as to why he had come to Spain, he sturdily maintained that he was under no obligation to answer such a query. That he was highly nervous and erratic there can be no question. Some of his critics have contended that he "alternated between delirium and reason and displayed great genius only at lucid intervals."

It is reasonably certain that he went to Spain because of the rebuilding of the church Santo Domingo el Antigua, on the outskirts of Toledo, having obtained a commission for several paintings for it through the offices of a friend. This church is now one of the objective points for all who would study his work first hand.

It has sometimes been said that soon after coming to Spain, El Greco forgot the sunny skies of Italy and took on the gloom of his new surroundings. However, those who have investigated the subject thoroughly find the beginnings of his highly individual manner in his early work done before he left Italy. Yet it is plain that the peculiar situation of Toledo, its bare rocks and bleak environs, worked its spell upon him and moulded his maturer style.

"Ah, it is difficult in words to describe Toledo! A great town, set on its rough and elevated rock of granite in the midst of the blue Sierra, closely ringed by the deep brown water of the Tajo, it has been content to wait unchanged through the slow centuries. Its steeply-rising streets, with their many buildings of so many different civilizations that here remain together; churches, convents, mosques, Gothic houses, walls and ornaments, steep Moorish passages—everywhere the Moorish design is evident—and a great Christian cathedral. Toledo is a real living picture, where each building is a voice that speaks the history of Spain."[2]

Although not a landscape painter, El Greco painted Toledo, perhaps for the city itself, since it is made so map-like in its accuracy. Of this picture, which we may speak of at this point, although it belonged to his later period, Calvert has observed: "Go, when night falls upon Toledo, to some such vantage point as the Puerta del Cambron where beneath the dome of the evening sky you will see the city, roof heaped against roof, tower against tower. It is this effect that Greco has caught. You will recognize the birth of those bluish whites, those strange hues of green; the beautiful cold color of the view is the color of Toledo."[3]

Even while he was engaged with his seven paintings for the church of Santo Domingo, El Greco received an order for a painting for the cathedral and executed his famous *El Expolio,* representing Christ despoiled of his raiment on Calvary. It was over this painting, its cost and its composition, that he became involved in his first law suit. It disturbed the conventional to find the three Marys near Christ at this moment and, further, the officials of the cathedral held the painter's price to be exorbitant. It is gratifying to know that he did not actually paint out

the figures of the women, as he finally consented to do, and that he was awarded his price for his work.

Since he had already won some fame, Philip II engaged him to make an altarpiece for the Escorial. However, its revolutionary style was displeasing to the king and the painting was not permitted to hang in the space first reserved for it.

It is idle to enumerate the numerous religious paintings done by El Greco for the churches and monasteries of Toledo. These adhered to the usual themes, representing dramatic episodes in the life of Christ and in the lives of patron saints. It was in composition and execution that they proved themselves wholly unlike anything before seen. Early in his career, El Greco caught the power of Tintoretto's swirling line and his seizure of the crucial moment. His figures are overtaken by the painter when racked by suffering or passion; yet there is Spanish restraint in his representations.

It is generally agreed that his masterpiece is the *Burial of Gonzalo Ruiz,* Count of Orgaz, a historical character closely associated with the city of Toledo. Gonzalo Ruiz had been governor of Orgaz at the very end of the thirteenth century. In 1300 he rebuilt a church dedicated to St. Thomas. The legend of his death was that, due to his pious and exemplary life, at his interment, the two saints Stephen and Augustine came from heaven to bury him with their own hands. Such was the story El Greco set about immortalizing in oil.

There are thirty figures in the painting and each is a portrait of some character in Toledo belonging to the artist's own generation. He himself is supposed to be the sixth figure, counting from the left.

"Each portrait is complete, yet each one gains enforced power from the contrasted presence of the others. The handling is superb. The luminous sheen of the black armour, with its reflection on the white sheet, the wonderful pontifical robes, glorious samples of texture-painting, the faces with their splendid modeling—every distinctive detail is perfect. Behind the principal figures stand a long row of Spanish hidalgos, the mourners for the Count.

They stretch from left to right of the canvas. Their Castilian faces, proud, cold and austere, still live upon the canvas. El Greco has caught the very spirit of Spain and left it imprinted upon these speaking faces."[4]

The first impression made upon the spectator by the paintings of El Greco is one of disturbed surprise at his elongated figures and contorted muscles. It is plain that the artist has cast aside all conventions, all rules and tenets of earlier painting and struck out for himself to depict what he saw and felt. Being so highly strung that sanity and insanity not infrequently seem to meet in him, it is evident that he felt intensely and his hand had the cunning to reveal the dynamic force of his thought. In dramatic action, in his arbitrary use of color and in individual composition, his work seemed so unusual and revolutionary to his contemporaries that they were divided in their estimate of it, as critics have been ever since. For nearly three hundred years El Greco was neglected. Latterly his part in the growth of Spanish art has been more justly estimated.

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1 Calvert: *El Greco*, 74.
2 Ibid., 34.
3 Ibid., 155.
4 Gallichan: *Spanish Painting*, 111.

EL GRECO

ALL nature was to Dominic Greco as a Living Presence. His art, as we have seen it, has been a series of experiments and statements to express this. We have traced the peculiar development of this special personality of his from stage to stages—stages that with sufficient accuracy we have divided into four periods. The first was the pupil's search for expression. The Roman-Venetian period commencing with the *Blind Man* of the Dresden Gallery, and ending with the *Cleansing of the Temple,* the transition picture which unites the Italian and the Spanish manner. The Venetian influence remained in the first period at Toledo culminating in *Christ Despoiled of his Raiment on Calvary.* These were the years of experiment and development that gave us the cycle of Santo Domingo and the *San Maurice* of the Escorial. In the middle period, after the great achievement of the *Enterrio,* for a time, we found Greco still more vehemently searching for emphasis of expression, making arbitrary experiments in form and color and in the use of pigment. . . .

We have reached the last stage in which the qualities gathered in the years are poured out in a fever of expression. Señor Cossio aptly states the truth, "the spring had come to the extreme limit of its tension." The change is seen in his technique; all the qualities we have noticed gain in force, and the intensity of expression rises almost to frenzy. Greco seeks for the idea so that his pictures may live and speak. Sometimes he stumbles in his methods—misses fire; never in this purpose, which was still, it would seem to us, the significance of movement. Throughout his career changes of process did not modify the aim of Greco. All his strange skill, the increased power of his imagination, his gathered knowledge of color and light are used in this service. This quality is present in all these last pictures which he seems to have painted entirely to please himself—to set down the vision of movement that every-

where he saw. Every picture is built up by its effect, and this effect is movement—life. By concentrating on a particular passage, by a contempt for detail and peddling accuracy, he directs our minds to this principal thing. His interest, as it were, compels ours; he realises his vision and makes us share in his imagination.

But it may be said that in many of these pictures the effect is forced; that impressiveness is lost in an effort of extravagance. Yes, this is true of some of these late pictures—but not of all. Genius does not hesitate; imagination does not see commonplaces. All this search for expression is done quite consciously; if strange, exaggerated—ugly, if you like, these pictures are without a trace of affectation. When Greco painted a vision he felt it imperative to symbolize his idea in the way that he did. Again we are reminded of that restless power to disturb, which the counter-Reformation brought into art. Greco painted what his imagination saw; and our imaginations must find his meaning.

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The moment has come, now we are in the presence of all Greco's work, to ask: What was his influence? What part has he played in the history of art? . . .

Works of such dominant personality, executed by a man of such singular temperament, of necessity found little response in his own age. Greco attained fame in Toledo; it is more doubtful whether he gained popularity. It would seem rather that he forced his personality on his contemporaries in the same way in which he forced his own style on the accustomed formulas of art. The legend of his madness, and the supposed alteration of his style to free himself from the charge of being the follower of Titian, were invented by his immediate successors to explain what they were unable to understand. It is not the only time that personality has paid such a price. The common opinion of the Greco-Venetian painter was that circulated by Palomino: "What he did well no one did better, and what he did badly was never done worse." In his own time Greco stood alone—that is the first truth we learn. Certainly he had no imitators and few pupils. . . .

Dominico Greco died when Velasquez was fifteen years old; and the great Spanish painter was his only true pupil. Señor Cossio is right when he says 'El Greco is a necessary antecedent to the works of Velasquez,' and again in a longer and important passage: 'Velasquez was the only one capable of learning from him with advantage, taking possession of the two essential elements which his work contains for posterity, on the one hand his method of coloring which widened the horizon of art, and, on the other, his lofty idealism which no other brush except El Greco's has attained in Spain, and from which flows all the elegance, the distinction, and the chivalry which links the two artists; and which are the common property—almost exclusively so—of these two in Spanish painting.' . . .

The world that has claimed and crowned Velasquez cannot any longer reject El Greco. We do not settle the account of genius when we have called it unusual, fantastic, or decadent. It is the solution of the dull that genius is extravagant consciously. . . .

It is the fate of forerunners to be forgotten: in art, even more certainly than in life, one man soweth and another inheriteth his labor.

Disowned for three centuries, still often misjudged—for it is easy to overestimate as it is to dislike his art—El Greco had sunk to the rank of a local celebrity, unknown outside of Toledo except to a few connoisseurs. But a reaction has set in, and today Greco's place in the world's art is an assured one. . . .

In the passionate and incessant search for truth of color Greco did succeed. He was the first to understand that effect that one color has in changing the tone of another color. Yes; color was Greco's great gift to Velasquez—and to the world.

ALBERT CALVERT.

b. *Velasquez*

"Supreme master of moderation."

Velasquez is one of the outstanding names in the annals of painting, as remarkable in his way as Leonardo, Titian or Rubens. He stands alone, as each great genius must always stand. Others made ready his pathway but he alone could follow it. He has been called "the painter's painter," as Spenser is called "the poet's poet." Just as the careless reader may glean something from Shakespeare, so the casual observer may appreciate Velasquez's capacity in a measure, but the profundity of the English dramatist and Spanish master alike will be revealed only to the thoughtful.

Calvert, to whom we are indebted for so many readable volumes concerning the Spanish artists, relates the following incident, which may well be pondered by each of us:

"A lover of Velasquez once took a friend to see one of his pictures—a portrait.

" 'I don't like it!' was the man's comment.

" 'Then stand and look at it until you have learned to like it.'

"And when all is said, this is the truth."[1]

The famous painter is known today by his mother's family name. His father's people came from the north of Portugal—the De Silvas, of noble rank. His mother belonged to the Andalusian country. Velasquez owed much to both; his mother gave him his love for art; however, it was his active father who bequeathed to him his tireless energy.

Diego Rodriguez de Silva y Velasquez was born in Seville in June of 1599. Three hundred years later the world observed his tercentenary. When of sufficient age, he was sent to the university but his predilection for drawing soon persuaded his family to allow him to study art. His first teacher was the elder Herrera, from whom, it is safe to say, he learned little. Then he went to study with Pacheco, whose comment on the mission of religious painting we have previously noted. Pacheco was by no means a gifted

painter but this may have been a blessing, for Velasquez was left to find himself and was largely self-taught. Pacheco appreciated the gifts of his young pupil and presently gave him his daughter in marriage. After Velasquez had made his way, his father-in-law was his faithful biographer and never wearied of singing the praises of "our Velasquez." We know little of his domestic life, but it is safe to say that Juana was a dutiful and devoted wife. We are told that she passed into eternal sleep a few days after she was informed of the death of her husband. Two daughters were born to Velasquez and his wife. One died in infancy. The husband of the other was also an artist.

In 1622 Velasquez made his first visit to Madrid. Philip IV had just been crowned king and he was known to be a patron of art. It is surmised that the rising painter desired to win his favor at the start. However, he was not presented to the king on this visit. A matter of first importance was that he had opportunity to study works of the Italian and Flemish masters. These opened new avenues for thought.

The following year he went again to the capital and this time had the good fortune to paint a portrait of the king. Not long after, he was made Court painter and given quarters in an old palace, the Alcázar. Thither came his family and Pacheco, in capacity of secretary.

In 1627 Rubens visited the Spanish Court and we have noted in connection with his life the importance of this visit in the career of Velasquez. Perhaps the most significant feature of their friendship was that the Spanish painter became convinced that he must go to Italy, whither he turned as soon as he was able to get royal permission. It so happened that he took passage on the ship that carried the Genoese general Spinola, conqueror of Breda. Afterwards, Velasquez painted what has been called the greatest historical painting in the world—*Las Lanzas*. Beyond doubt his conversations with Spinola on this voyage inspired the picture.

Velasquez spent some time in Venice and was fascinated by the work of Titian, to whom he owed much. Then he

went to Rome and as we become familiar with his own field of art it is not surprising to us to find that Raphael made no appeal to him.

Philip IV sent the painter a command to go to Naples and paint the portrait of the Infanta Maria of Hungary. It was while fulfilling this royal mandate that he met Ribera, who contributed something to his art.

In 1631 Velasquez was back in Madrid, where he remained for eighteen years. Honors were heaped upon him. He was made Officer of the Wardrobe, and later, Inspector of Buildings. He became responsible for Court entertainments, much as Leonardo had once been at the Court of Sforza. Lovers of both artists much regret the time and energy which such arduous duties placed upon them. None the less, in the instance of Velasquez, we can feel that his position at Court gave him his opportunity.

It was after his first visit to Italy that Velasquez painted that long series of court pictures by which he is best known—portraits of the king and other members of the royal family; of the dwarfs and human monstrosities that the Hapsburgs gathered around them for their edification and entertainment. Don Carlos, the crown prince and his mother, first queen of Philip IV, were painted time after time. Afterwards, he painted the second wife, Mariana and her flowerlike children.

In 1649 Velasquez went a second time to Italy, after which his great masterpieces were executed.

He died suddenly in 1660, worn out by the arduous duties placed upon him in escorting Philip IV's daughter, Maria Theresa, to Louis XIV. Festivities that filled three weeks were celebrated on the border of the two countries concerned. The artist, upon whom many responsibilities fell, contracted a fever and died immediately.

Comparatively little is known of Velasquez in his private life, probably because private life was little known to him. His place was among princes, the favorite of a king. The formality and restraint that enveloped courts in the seventeenth century and all but smothered those at the Court of Spain hung over the court painter. By birth and temperament, Velasquez was an aristocrat and cold

reserve modified by serenity and perfect poise were characteristic of the man.

It is probable that Leonardo forever pondered something within and Velasquez forever pondered something without. Velasquez was a realist who was guided by inborn artistic sense to choose what might fittingly find its way into his compositions. Having made his selection, his all-seeing eyes directed his hand to set on canvas exactly what he saw, and it had the cunning to fulfill the instruction. As we gaze upon his paintings, we see, if we are able, exactly what Velasquez saw. We need not seek for concealed or subtle meanings; everything is clear and plain. Scenes that he witnessed, people whom he saw, stand before us with astonishing accuracy.

If we trace his art from its beginnings in the far-off days when he began in Seville, the city of his birth, it becomes plain that the ease which is the charm of his later work, was not immediately acquired. It has well been said that he cared little *what* he painted—only *how* he painted. Still-life, genre, such subjects concerned him at first. He was never given to the representation of religious scenes and when he attempted them, he painted them much as he painted life around him. The holy women of Scriptural lore became peasant women of Spain.

Portraiture was his special province. He was limited to the royal family and their host of retainers, for the most part—no inspiring group one might think at first. To paint buffoons, dwarfs, monstrosities, might seem appalling to a lesser genius. Someone has significantly observed that Velasquez never saw ugliness; wherever he looked, he saw possibility and charm and to his clear eyes these qualities were not absent in the faces of the unfortunates, brought, like other pets, to a vapid Court to amuse its gloomy inmates.

In the great rooms of the Alcázar, with their subdued light, the artist learned to see space and to feel atmosphere. His backgrounds testify to his mastery of the art of representing distance and space.

Velasquez's masterpieces are two remarkable compositions: *Las Hilanderas,* The Spinners, and *Las Meninas,*

the Maids of Honor. The first is a scene painted in a tapestry factory; the second, a scene in the royal palace. Calvert points to these wonderful creations of art as sufficient indication that Velasquez was not hampered by the restrictions which court life placed upon him but through its experiences found himself.

"Again it may be pointed out that his duties, which were to supervise every detail pertaining to the interior management of the royal residences, must have led him to visit, among other places, the Royal Tapestry Manufactory of Santa Barbara. And of this *Las Hilanderas* is another superb record. Both this picture and *Las Mininas* were not painted in a studio, but on the spot and in the exact light which Velasquez saw flood the scenes. Remembering these things, and the special temperament of Velasquez, the present writer would recall a statement made in an early chapter of this book on this same question: 'We come to this, then, that in this wholly Spanish and ceremonious existence, where life was passed as a stately pageant, and the bull-fight was enjoyed always, even when ruin waited at the gate, Velasquez found, as we certainly believe, the exact environment needed to develop to the full the qualities that were his.'

"It is useless to make arbitrary assertions, but had Velasquez not been chosen by Philip as his Aposentador Mayor, it seems probable that *Las Meninas* and *Las Hilanderas* would not have been painted. For under no circumstances, and on no subject, does Velasquez ever reveal to us more than his sight revealed to him."[2]

It may well be questioned whether descriptions of paintings are worth the making, for a picture is something to be seen and felt rather than to be explained. However, many an artist yields to the spoken word better than Velasquez. For him it is unnecessary. When we look upon his work, we see what was visible to him, provided our vision is keen enough to take it in. Otherwise, we must study it until the ability to do so is developed.

[1] Calvert, *Velasquez*, 179.
[2] Ibid., 137.

c. *Murillo*

Both Murillo and Velasquez were born in Seville; both attained to high rank in their art; yet they were as widely separated in outlook as in social position. We have found Velasquez a painter prince among royal princes. At the king's earnest behest, he was made a knight of Santiago and was escorted to his grave by nobles, as became a member of this exalted order. Murillo belonged to the people and although he was the foremost artist of Spain after the death of Velasquez, and the idol of Andalusians, he never ceased to be of the people and paint for them.

After a custom not unusual in Spain, he took the name of his mother's family, and is known today as Murillo. His baptismal name was Bartolomé Estéban. He was born in Seville at the very close of 1617 and was baptized on the first or second day of the new year. When he was only eleven years old, his parents were snatched away by an epidemic, while Bartolomé and his little sister were left to face the world alone. A charitable uncle cared for them awhile but the lad's propensity to draw led to his early apprenticeship to Juan del Castillo, perhaps the poorest painter in Seville.

A few years later, Murillo set out to make his way in the world and he found it a most difficult one. He was too poor to buy canvas and for some time cut saga-cloth into squares and decorated the coarse fiber, much like burlap, with crude pictures. These he sold at the weekly fair, hawking his wares like the other vendors. In this way he learned exactly what the people liked and what found ready sale, and this became so deeply impressed upon his consciousness that it is safe to say long after his early struggle had become little more than a dream, this knowledge guided him, however unconsciously.

In 1642, having made provision for his sister, Murillo suddenly disappeared from Seville and took his way to Madrid, where he studied for three years, under the direction of Velasquez. Nowhere does Velasquez shine more brightly than in his kindly consideration for the young painter, obscure, struggling for a chance to learn. The

Court painter obtained permission for him to visit the royal galleries and assisted him in many ways. He attempted to rouse Murillo to go to Italy, but the homing instinct was strong within him. Instead, he turned again toward Seville.

His first commission upon his return was obtained from the Franciscan Friars, whose resources were not sufficient to attract the older painters. They desired eleven paintings, although their fee was not sufficient for half that number. Nevertheless, the ambitious Murillo eagerly embraced the opportunity so afforded him to bring his work to the attention of his townspeople. Throughout his life he never forgot his gratitude for his first order.

Whereas Velasquez never painted any considerable number of religious pictures, Murillo painted few that were not illustrative of sacred lore. His street urchins, with their impossibly innocent expressions and winsome ways, belong for the most part to his early period when the all-important question was, how salable would a picture prove?

In 1660 Murillo interested the artists of Seville in a plan dear to his heart: the establishment of an Academy of Art for the aid and encouragement of students. He and the younger Herrera were made the two presidents, alternating in performing the duties of the office. So long as Murillo lived the institution flourished.

Due to his well established reputation, Murillo was able to make a desirable marriage with a wealthy lady who is reputed to have directed his domestic affairs satisfactorily. He had one daughter who entered a convent and of his two sons, Gaspar painted in his father's style. The other took orders.

The only time that Murillo was lured from the city of his birth, after his return from Madrid in 1645, was when he yielded to the entreaty of the Capuchin monks to decorate their chapel in Cadiz. Falling from a scaffold, he received injuries that caused his death in 1682.

When the French army invaded Spain during the Napoleonic wars, Marshal Soult, who was an enthusiastic collector of art, appropriated many of the treasures of

Spain, which were taken out of the country and scattered over the world. Many paintings of Murillo suffered this fate. Some were afterwards restored to Spain; others found their way to Russia, Germany and America. Still, it is to Seville that the lover of Murillo must go to find favorable opportunity to study the development of his art. Some of his paintings have wholly perished, having been done to beautify buildings no longer in existence. Churches, convents and public buildings, such as *Los Venerables,* a home for aged priests, absorbed his attention. He was occupied for six years in the chapel of the Capuchin monks.

It is possible to discern several stages of Murillo's art. In the first place, specimens of his early work, done to win quick popularity, are still to be seen. When he came back from copying the Flemish and Spanish masters in Madrid, his style was realistic, touched with sentiment. Afterwards, his realism largely disappeared, giving way to religious emotion.

Murillo was temperamentally suited to setting the religious thought and feeling of Spain on canvas. In the very first year of his birth a papal edict had proclaimed the Immaculate Conception of Mary. In no other land was this theory more joyfully received. Murillo painted no less than twenty pictures of *Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception,* holding closely to the laws laid down by the church for her portrayal. Pacheco had written: "Our Lady is to be painted in the flower of her age, from twelve to thirteen years old, with sweet grave eyes, a nose and mouth of the most perfect form, rosy cheeks, and the finest streaming hair of golden hue; in a word, with all the beauty that a pencil can express." She was to be "clothed with the sun and with the moon under her feet, and having upon her head a crown of twelve stars," after the vision of the Apocalypse. Useless, then, to criticize the artist for making her unlike earthly creatures. She was to be made transcendent.

Nowhere does Murillo show his bond with the common folk of his country more surely than in his lack of restraint —that fine quality that was always so characteristic of Velasquez. Moreover, his trivial sentimentality robs much

of his work of the fundamental element of sincerity. On the other hand, his superb use of color atones for much. Nor are critics united in their estimate of his true worth. Some there are, like Amicis, who accord him highest praise. Others disparage him unduly.

Certain sentences from Calvert, who discusses his elements of weakness and strength, are helpful. Culling from his biography of the Andalusian artist, he says: "Certainly Murillo had orignality, and his personal quality, if Spanish or rather Andalusian, is very definite. The emotion in these pictures is the extravagant emotion of Spain as it turns to religion, only here the extravagance is merged in sweetness. . . .

"His treatment of the subjects and his conception of religion belonged not to the world, nor could the lesson they preached have any influence upon posterity—they were inspired by and belonged to Andalusian Spain of the seventeenth century. While the mastery of his execution and the charm of his coloring will command admiration and homage so long as his canvases endure, his works beside those of Velasquez, of Rubens, of Titian, and others, whose masterpieces challenge his achievement in the Prado Gallery of Madrid are, by many, regarded as pictures of a fashion in art that is past, their inspiration marred by their triviality and sentiment. . . . Neither his views of life nor of religion are universal. Murillo reveals to us the Andalusian habit of life and the monkish view of religion, both idealized, but strictly local; often beautiful in technique, but even here the gift is facility rather than great achievement; and, to our modern ideas, much, at any rate, of his art is destitute of message. In his day he was adored, and in his own country he will always stand supreme. He represented for the people of Andalusia their saintly legends in a manner which brought the story and the moral straight home to their hearts. He felt with the eyes of the people and they saw with the eyes of Murillo. . . .

"The decorative simplicity that governs all great art is wanting in his work. He poses his figures in attitudes which might be natural as passing movements, but the result is affectation when those postures are imprisoned

upon the canvas. His figures are Andalusian men and women, but they are studied into unreality. . . . Every detail of scene and atmosphere is emotionally interpreted. Murillo's realism was not the actuality of Velasquez and Zurbaran; he was not content simply to record what he saw. Instead, he painted what the Church had taught him men ought to see."[1]

[1] Calvert: *Murillo*, 36; 42, ff.

VI

ENGLISH PAINTING

ENGLAND was the last of the great European states to develop a national art. Indeed, with the marked exceptions of poetry and drama, the English people have not found their characteristic expression in the fine arts. The reason for this may be sought in the very temperament of the nation, wherein intellect dominates; and emotion is continually suppressed. Since the fine arts provide our means of emotional communication with our fellows, it naturally follows that generation after generation of emotional suppression will operate disadvantageously to art.

The first distinguished artist to take up a residence in England was Hans Holbein, during the reign of Henry VIII. He was a portraitist of exceptional ability and during his sojourn in London he filled many a commission for the king, painting as well the portraits of prominent men of the times—cite, for example, that of Archbishop Warham.

After the death of Holbein, in 1543, we must wait until the period of Charles I to find even a foreign painter of talent in England. Neither Mary nor Elizabeth nor yet James I were patrons of painting or sculpture, although drama reached remarkable expression under the Tudors.

Charles I was a lover of art and assembled a fine collection of paintings. He caused a large gallery to be prepared in Whitehall Palace for their protection. His collection is said to have included more than twenty Titians, eleven paintings by Correggio, several by Raphael, at least four by Paolo Veronese.

In his *Lives of British Painters,* Cunningham comments upon the new attitude toward art during the reign of Charles I. He says: "The influence of a king of true taste, like Charles, was soon visible in the nation. The foreign countries who, to Elizabeth and James, had presented necklaces and jewels and splendid toys, now propi-

tated the English Court with gifts of the fairest works of art. The states of Holland, instead of ivory puzzles and cabinets formed after the ingenious pattern known to school-boys by the name of the Walls of Troy, sent Tintorettos and Titians. . . . Through the interposition of Rubens he obtained the Cartoons of Raphael, and by the negotiation of Buckingham, the collection of the Duke of Mantua, containing eighty-two pictures, principally by Romano, Titian and Correggio. These and others rendered the great gallery of Whitehall a place of general attraction; there the king was oftener to be found than in his own apartments."

It must always remain a matter for regret that a disastrous fire destroyed many of these priceless treasures.

In 1632, the Flemish painter, Van Dyck, came to England, where he executed some of his greatest works. His portraits of the king and members of the royal family are universally known, having been copied times without number.

The downfall of Charles I and the austerity of the Puritan régime which followed terminated interest in art until the Restoration. Then Lely of Utrecht, Kneller of Lübeck and Vanloo of Aix continued to paint royalty and the English Court, as had the greater Holbein and Van Dyck.

Hogarth was born just before the dawn of the eighteenth century and before his time there was no such thing as an English school of painting. The student of early English art must turn to architecture, sculpture, woodcarving and to illuminated books. Such pictures as are worth consideration were done by those who came from other parts of Europe, bringing with them not alone their genius but their style and methods of work.

1. Hogarth

Hogarth is sometimes called the "Father of English Painting." If anyone is to be so dubbed, it is probably appropriate to settle upon him, not alone because of his chronological place but for the reason that he took so combative a position regarding the craze for "old masters" that dominated his age. Picture dealers and brokers molded public opinion in favor of painters of the past and away from contemporary art. Hogarth realized that the majority of purchasers did not judge paintings on their merits but by their cost. Copies of Italian Renaissance pictures found a ready market while nothing was done to encourage those who were developing contemporary art. This aroused his pugnacious nature and he fought these standards, which seemed to him so false, as long as he lived.

William Hogarth (1697-1764) came of a sturdy line of yeomen. His father was a classical student and a school master. The family removed to London when the future artist was still a lad. He was apprenticed to a goldsmith engraver but soon wearied of the monotony of the work which gave little or no outlet for originality. He taught himself copper engraving and until recent times his engravings insured him popularity. Today his painting is rated far above his engravings, directly reversing the verdict of his own age.

In 1724 Hogarth entered Thornhill's Art Academy, just opening. How much he learned there it might be difficult to estimate, but five years later he eloped with the daughter of Sir Thomas Thornhill, inciting the latter's wrath. After the daring young artist had won some success, his father-in-law was reconciled to him. The marriage appears to have been a happy one; however, no children came to bless the union. Jane Thornhill survived her distinguished husband many years and at last the king gave her a pension of forty pounds per year.

Hogarth belongs to a group of satirists, whose scathing comment preserves for all time the crudities and hypocrisies of the age. The eighteenth century in England

presented much to discourage the right-minded. The great industrial revolution was on its way, crushing the unfit with relentless force. The penal laws were antiquated, having outlived the civilization that framed them. The severest punishments were meted out for slight crimes, such as petty thieving, and cruelties and barbarities made people callous to the enormity of injustice. In these respects English society did not present an unusual spectacle: the same conditions prevailed in France, Italy and other European lands; they existed in the colonies in America.

It is usually the case that the satirist can awaken men to a realization of existing evils when the moralist fails, and the eighteenth century was not lacking in caustic tongues. Henry Fielding turned the butt of his wit against hypocrisies; Addison, who died about the time Hogarth won his first laurels, tempered his pen with kindness. Pope flayed as relentlessly in verse as Hogarth by use of pencil and brush.

So far as English painting is concerned, Hogarth's achievement lay in his portraits. However, it is impossible to pass by the series of "moral" paintings and engravings which gave him importance while he lived. He himself has written that he conceived of his picture as his stage, his figures as his actors, and he aspired to present a "dumb show" to tell its story as unerringly as the sharpest, wittiest comedy.

His first series, which took London by storm, was called *"The Harlot's Progress."* In six scenes, Hogarth depicted the career of an innocent country girl, possessed of better looks than sense, bewildered in the great city and falling into vice, ending her wretched days by the hand of inexorable law. Later, in eight scenes, he made a corresponding illustration of a Rake, whose ill-chosen steps led finally to the mad-house. *Marriage-a-la-Mode* reaches into the upper stratum of society, as the earlier series had been concerned with the lower and middle classes. Here a gouty Earl contracts to marry his nephew and heir to the well seasoned daughter of a rich tradesman. The indifferent youth soon inherits an earldom and riches and launches

upon a succession of irregularities that terminate in his death.

Numerous other subjects suggested themselves to the artist, much as they occur to the cartoonist today. Elections were notoriously corrupt in England of Hogarth's time; this suggested his *Four Scenes of an Election*. Another, *Four Stages of Cruelty*, would be so offensive to the spectator today that, as a critic observes, only one accustomed to the dissecting table could endure it. So has public opinion changed since the good old days when executions were the occasion for popular gatherings. In these paintings, which were quickly engraved to give them wide circulation, Hogarth set forth his age, "its character, its habits, its furnishments, its aims, its passions and its vices. Life was lived much in the street; executions and punishments were carried out in public; the pillory was set up everywhere; punishments were terribly brutal and for the slightest offences; death was meted out pathetically readily. The effect was far from deterrent. Vice openly paraded itself. Hogarth had not to search for it; it assailed him at every corner."[1]

Until the time of Hogarth, there had been no need of legal protection for the artist. Consequently, unscrupulous dealers made piratical copies of his popular engravings and sold them openly. Thereupon, Hogarth, with characteristic combativeness, appealed to Parliament and caused the enactment of the measure of 1735, which gave the sale of engravings exclusively to their designer.

Hogarth was a realist through and through. This was not always gratifying to those who sat to him for portraits, and we have the words of the artist that "I found by mortifying experience that whoever would succeed in this branch must make divinities of all who sit to him."

Unhappily, Hogarth was prompted to write a book on *The Analysis of Beauty*, as the result of some discussion of his work. Repeatedly it has been proven that those who paint pictures are by no means best able to set their conceptions into the medium of words. It is safe to say that his *Analysis* added little to the world's store of artistic wisdom; on the other hand, it gave his enemies endless

material for witticism because of its obscurities and inconsistencies.

Hogarth was the typical "John Bull," pugnacious and ever ready for a fight. He became involved in an unfortunate skirmish with Wilks because of an attack he made upon the London *Times,* wherein abuse was directed against Pitt, the greatest statesman of his era. Hogarth was wholly in the wrong and the bitterness engendered over the deplorable altercation is best passed over in silence. The enduring result of it was the unforgettable portrait that Hogarth made of Wilks, in retaliation.

Those who would understand Hogarth's great contribution to English art must study his portraits. One was made of Captain Coram, who established a Foundling's Home in London, wherein the likeness of the charitable old salt was placed. Another of Hogarth's sister shows his genius. He portrayed the Duke of Cumberland as a boy; George II and Family; George Arnold; Miss Arnold; and the actress Peg Woffington he painted eight times. Greatest of all his creations are his *Shrimp-Girl* and *The Stay-Maker,* dashed off on the spur of the moment. These give Hogarth place with the realistic geniuses of the world.

[1] Macfall: *History of Painting,* VII, 111.

HOGARTH

By Cunningham

IN 1736 Hogarth dropped one or two more of his burning satires on the reigning follies of London. *The Sleeping Congregation,* in which a heavy parson is promoting with all the alacrity of dullness, the slumber of a respectable, but singular auditory, is very clever. Similar scenes must arise on the fancy of all who look upon this work. Sleep seems to have come over the whole like a cloud. The last who yields is the clerk, a portly man, with a shining face. One of his eyes is closed, and the other is only kept open by a very fine young woman, who is sleeping very earnestly at his left hand. He is conscious of the temptation; his efforts to keep awake are very ludicrous—but it is easy to see that sleep is to be the conqueror. The second design was that of the *Distressed Poet*—a subject half-serious, half-comic. The bard himself is evidently one of those who

"Strain from hard-bound brains eight lines a year";

and, though the subject in hand is a gold mine, inspiration descends slowly. He is as busy with one hand as if the muse could be won by scratching, and holds the pen in the other wet with ink, to note down the tardy and reluctant words. His wife, a sweet-looking, thrifty body, as a poet's spouse requires to be, applies her hands to a certain kind of work which will not disturb with its noise the painful reverie of her husband; she is seeking at the same time to soothe, by mild looks and well-chosen words, the clamour of a milk-woman, who exhibits an unliquidated tally. . . .

The next work of Hogarth was *The Enraged Musician.* This sensitive mortal, by the frogs on his coat, appears to be a Frenchman; and by the splendour of his dress, and grandeur of his house, we at once see that he is one of those successful performers who, with better fortune than Glasgerion, who harped fish out of the water, succeed in fiddling

the gold out of misers' pockets. To perplex and distress the refined ear of this delicate Monsieur, the artist has assailed him with such a mixture and uproar of vexatious sounds as defies one to contemplate. It seems impossible to increase his annoyance by the addition of any other din, save the braying of an ass, which Cowper says is the only unmusical sound in nature. "This strange scene," said a wit of the day, "deafens one to look at it."

* * * * *

Hogarth was now in his forty-eighth year: his fame was established; he was rich enough to maintain a carriage; and though his brother artists conceded to him the name of painter with whimsical reluctance, he was everywhere received with the respect and honour due to a man of high talents and uncommon attainments. Success seldom teaches humility; it wrought no material change in Hogarth. When a poor student he displayed the same firmness of purpose in his pursuits, and defended his adherence to the dramatic species of painting (which he invented) with the same warmth, decision, and enthusiasm which characterized him now. Throughout his life his pursuits and his opinions were the same. He imagined a new national style of composition, and to this he adhered from youth to age; for the short periods devoted to portrait-painting cannot be considered as any abandonment of his original purpose—but only as sacrifices to necessity.

Hogarth supported himself by the sale of his prints: the prices of his paintings kept pace neither with his fame nor with his expectations.

* * * * *

William Hogarth was rather below the middle size; his eye was peculiarly bright and piercing; his look shrewd, sarcastic and intelligent; the forehead high and round. He was active in person, bustling in manner, and fond of affecting a little state and importance. He was of a temper cheerful, joyous, and companionable; fond of mirth and good-fellowship, desirous of saying strong and pointed things;—ardent in friendship and in resentment. . . .

His fame was flown far and wide; his skill as an engraver spread his reputation as a painter; and all who

love the dramatic representation of actual life—all who have hearts to be gladdened by humour—all who are pleased with judicious and well directed satire—all who are charmed with the ludicrous looks of popular folly—and all who can be moved with the pathos of human suffering—are admirers of Hogarth. He belonged to no school of art; he was the product of no academy; no man living or dead had any share in forming his mind or in rendering his hand skilful. He was the spontaneous offspring of the graphic spirit of his country, as native to the art of England as independence is, and he may be fairly called, in his own walk, the first-born of her spirit.

He painted life as he saw it. He gives no vision of bygone things—no splendid images of ancient manners; he regards neither the historian's page nor the poet's song. He was contented with the occurrences of the passing day—with the folly or the sin of the hour; to the garb and fashion of the moment, however, he adds story and sentiment for all time. . . .

"As a painter," says Walpole, "Hogarth has slender merit." What is the merit of a painter? If it be to represent life—to give us the image of man—to exhibit the workings of his heart—to record the good and evil of his nature—to set in motion before us the very beings with whom the earth is peopled—to shake us with mirth—to sadden us with woeful reflections, to please us with natural grouping, vivid action, and vigorous coloring—Hogarth has done all this; and if he that has done so be not a painter, who will show us one? I claim a signification as wide for the word painter as for the word poet. But there seems to be a disposition to limit the former to those who have been formed under some peculiar course of study—and produced works in the fashion of such and such great masters. This I take to be mere pedantry; and that as well might all men be excluded from the rank of poets who have not composed epics, dramas, odes or elegies according to the rules of the Greeks.

2. Reynolds

It would be difficult to imagine two artists more unlike than Reynolds, the great English portraitist, and Hogarth, whose career we have just considered. Hogarth set his face directly away from the so-called "grand manner" of painting; Reynolds admired it and held it up to his students for emulation. Hogarth was the pugnacious Englishman; Reynolds, the dignified gentleman of the courtly manner. Hogarth concerned himself for the most part with the middle and lower classes, although, to be sure, he painted royalty and persons in high position. He was devoid of all cant, somewhat coarse and naturally combative. Reynolds was thoroughly academic. He admonished his pupils to "copy masters" although he appears to have spent no protracted period after his visit to Italy in such occupation.

Joshua Reynolds was born in Devonshire, in 1723, when Hogarth was twenty-six and already somewhat of a celebrity because of his dramatic creations. Reynolds came of a line of clergymen and scholars. His father was a schoolmaster and a parson, who was disturbed because his son chose to adorn his school books with pictures instead of mastering their contents.

The future artist gained some rudiments of drawing in his own locality and when eighteen went to London. It was not wholly to his advantage that he began to study under the direction of Hudson, an indifferent painter, whose mannerisms and teachings sank too deeply into the receptive mind of the gifted pupil. Finally, when Reynolds' native ability showed him indisputably superior to his teacher, Hudson dismissed him.

In 1749, Commodore Keppel took the young painter along with him when sent by the government to the Mediterranean to deal out summary justice to Algerian pirates. Thus Reynolds was enabled to reach Italy and to study for some time the paintings of the great Renaissance colorists. He experimented for years to discover the secret of Titian's use of colors and is said to have mutilated a Titian in his vain endeavor.

Upon his return to England, Reynolds' reputation was made immediately by the lifelike portrait he made of Commodore Keppel. He became the popular portraitist of the hour and more applied to him for sittings than he was able to accommodate, despite his thrifty habits and assiduous labor.

His home became the rendezvous for many of the noted men of the day. Samuel Johnson developed warm affection for him; Garrick frequently dropped in to meet the little coterie of friends who were usually to be found there—Goldsmith, Gibbon, Burke and Sterne among them.

In 1769 the Royal Academy was founded in London with Reynolds as its first president. George III knighted him for the occasion. Reynolds' well known *Discourses on Art* were prepared—with Dr. Johnson's help, it was said—during his occupancy of office. Reynolds had partially lost his hearing during a severe illness while in Italy and his deafness increased. His delivery of his *Discourses* was so poor that few were able to understand him when he presented them before the Royal Academy. As a matter of fact, they have literary rather than art value today, for, like many another artist, when he attempted to write, he produced much chaff for the occasional grains of wheat.

Reynolds never married; painting was the mistress whom he served unsparingly. There were years wherein he turned off as many as one hundred and fifty portraits and those prominent, whether socially or politically, sat to him sooner or later.

It is a matter for regret that his method of mixing and applying colors has not stood the test of time. Instead, many of his paintings have deterioriated so that the spectator may no longer judge of their original appearance. An amusing story is told of a fast liver, whom he painted, returning twenty years after to find that his portrait had grown old along with him.

A complete list of portraits executed by Reynolds would be long indeed. Suffice it to mention but a few of his best known creations. He made portraits of Dr. Johnson, Burke, Walpole, Garrick, Sheridan; he represented Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse; Garrick in his rôle of Richard

III; he painted Angelica Kauffmann repeatedly and his little niece Offey; the three Montgomery sisters—The Three Graces—are shown with garlands of flowers in a pleasing composition.

Reynolds was the first to treat children on canvas as children and not as little men and women. However, he was more successful in his portraits of men than of women and children. Doubtless they interested him more. One writer observes with some penetration that Reynolds looked upon women and children as most of us look upon strange animals at the zoo. He idealized women, never forgetting the "grand manner."

Among the numerous pictures scattered over the world today, bearing his signature, there are some which are priceless. Frances Gordon, whose curly head appears in five poses in the so-called *Angel Heads; The Age of Innocence; The Strawberry Girl;* little Miss Bowles as *Love me, love my Dog;* these are done in his happiest manner.

Bensusan says: "In society Reynolds would seem to have been courtly and reserved. He did not expand to women as he did to men, for he looked upon women and children as subjects for classical treatment. He made them extremely beautiful; he gave them graces and gifts that flatter the imagination of those who gaze upon his pictures today: but there are not too many portraits of women among those painted by Reynolds in which there is a large quality of humanity. He suppresses a great part of the human interest that may have been in them and replaces it with beauty of color and line. Now and again, of course, he is very fortunate. When he painted the great courtesans of his day, Polly Fisher, Nelly O'Brien, and others of that frail sisterhood, the qualities he omitted left the sitters quite human. There was no suggestion of the classic about them. A Nelly O'Brien at her best is just a woman, while some of the high-born ladies at their best became a little too cold, a little too stately, a little too well posed for the wicked world they lived in."[1]

[1] Bensusan: *Reynolds*, 74.

From *The Twelfth Discourse*

By Sir Joshua Reynolds

Delivered to the Students of the Royal Academy December 10, 1784.

Gentlemen:

In consequence of the situation in which I have the honor to be placed in this Academy, it has often happened, that I have been consulted by the young students who intend to spend some years in Italy, concerning the method of regulating their studies. I am, as I ought to be, solicitously desirous to communicate the entire result of my experience and observation; and though my openness and facility in giving my opinions might make some amends for whatever was defective in them, yet I fear my answers have not often given satisfaction. Indeed I have never been sure, and was not without some suspicion that they had not themselves very distinct ideas of the object of their inquiry.

If the information required was, by what means the path that leads to excellence could be discovered; if they wished to know whom they were to take for their guides; what to adhere to, and what to avoid; where they were to bait, and where they were to take up their rest; what was to be tasted only, and what should be their diet; such general directions are certainly proper for a student to ask, and for me, to the best of my capacity, to give; but these rules have already been given: they have, in reality, been the subject of almost all my Discourses from this place. But I am rather inclined to think, that, by *method of study,* it was meant (as several do mean) that the times and the seasons should be prescribed, and the order settled, in which every thing was to be done: that it might be useful to point out to what degree of excellence one part of the Art was to be carried before the student proceeded to the next; how long he was to continue to draw from the ancient statues, when to begin to compose, and when to apply to the study of coloring.

Such a detail of instruction might be extended with a great deal of plausible and ostentatious amplification. But

it would at best be useless. Our studies will be for ever, in a very great degree, under the direction of chance; like travellers, we must take what we can get, and when we can get it; whether it is or is not administered to us in the most commodious manner, in the most proper place, or at the exact minute when we would wish to have it.

Treatises on education and methods of study have always appeared to me to have one general fault. They proceed upon a false supposition of life; as if we possessed not only a power over events and circumstances, but had a greater power over ourselves than I believe any of us will be found to possess. Instead of supposing ourselves to be perfect patterns of wisdom and virtue, it seems to me more reasonable to treat ourselves (as I am sure we must now and then treat others) like humorous children, whose fancies are often to be indulged, in order to keep them in good humour with themselves and their pursuits. It is necessary to use some artifice of this kind in all processes which by their very nature are long, tedious and complex, in order to prevent our taking that aversion to our studies which the continual shackles of methodical restraint are sure to produce.

I would rather wish a student as soon as he goes abroad, to employ himself upon whatever he has been incited to by any immediate impulse, than to go sluggishly about a prescribed task: whatever he does in such a state of mind little advantage accrues from it, nothing sinks deep enough to leave any lasting impression; and it is impossible that any thing should be well understood, or well done, that is taken into a reluctant understanding and executed with a servile hand.

It is desirable, and indeed is necessary to intellectual health, that the mind should be recreated and refreshed with a variety in our studies; that in the irksomeness of uniform pursuit we should be relieved, and, if I may so say, deceived, as much as possible. Besides, the minds of men are so very differently constituted, that it is impossible to find one method which shall be suited to all. It is of no use to prescribe to those who have no talents; and those who have talents will find methods for themselves—methods dictated to them by their own particular disposi-

tions and by the experience of their own particular necessities.

However, I would not be understood to extend this doctrine to the younger students. The first part of the life of a student, like that of other schoolboys, must necessarily be a life of restraint. The grammar, the rudiments, however unpalatable, must at all events be mastered. After a habit is acquired of drawing correctly from the model (whatever it may be, which he has before him) the rest, I think, may be safely left to chance; always supposing that the student is *employed* and that his studies are directed to the proper object.

A passion for his art, and an eager desire to excel, will more than supply the place of method. By leaving a student to himself, he may possibly indeed be led to undertake matters above his strength: but the trial will at least have this advantage, it will discover to himself his own deficiencies; and this discovery alone is a very considerable acquisition. One inconvenience, I acknowledge, may attend bold and arduous attempts: frequent failure may discourage. This evil, however, is not more pernicious than the slow proficiency which is the natural consequence of too easy tasks.

Whatever advantages method may have in dispatch of business, and there it certainly has many, I have but little confidence of its efficacy in acquiring excellence in any art whatever. Indeed, I have always strongly suspected that this love of method on which some persons appear to place so great dependence, is, in reality, at the bottom, a love of idleness, a want of sufficient energy to put themselves into immediate action: it is a sort of an apology to themselves for doing nothing. I have known artists who may truly be said to have spent their whole lives, or at least the most precious part of their lives, in planning methods of study, without ever beginning; resolving, however, to put it all in practice at some time or other, when a certain period arrives, when proper conveniences are procured—or when they remove to a certain place better calculated for study. It is not uncommon for such persons to go abroad with the most honest and sincere resolutions of studying hard, when

they shall arrive at the end of their journey. The same want of exertion, arising from the same cause which made them at home put off the day of labour until they had found a proper scheme for it, still continues in Italy, and they consequently return home with little, if any, improvement.

In the practice of art, as well as in morals, it is necessary to keep a watchful and jealous eye over ourselves; idleness, assuming the specious disguise of industry, will lull to sleep all suspicion of our want of an active exertion of strength. A provision of endless apparatus, a bustle of infinite inquiry and research, or even the mere mechanical labour of copying, may be employed, to evade and shuffle off real labour, the real labour of thinking.

I have declined for these reasons to point out any particular method and course of study to young artists on their arrival in Italy. I have left it to their own prudence which will grow and improve upon them in the course of unremitted, ardent industry, directed by a real love of their profession, and an unfeigned admiration of those who have been universally admitted as patterns of excellence in the art.

In the exercise of that general prudence, I shall here submit to their consideration such miscellaneous observations as have occurred to me on considering the mistaken notions or evil habits which have prevented that progress toward excellence, which the natural abilities of several artists might otherwise have enabled them to make.

False opinions and vicious habits have done far more mischief to students, and to professors too, than any wrong methods of study.

Under the influence of sloth, or of some mistaken notion, is that disposition which always wants to lean on other men. Such students are always talking of the prodigious progress they should make. if they could but have the advantage of being taught by some particular eminent master. To him they would wish to transfer that care, which they ought and must take of themselves. Such are to be told that after the rudiments are past, very little of our art can be taught by others. The most skilful master can do little

more than put the end of the clue into the hands of his scholar, by which he must conduct himself.

It is true, the beauties and defects of the works of our predecessors may be pointed out; the principles on which their works are conducted may be explained; the great examples of ancient art may be spread out before them; but the most sumptuous entertainment is prepared in vain if the guests will not take the trouble of helping themselves.

Even the Academy itself, where every convenience for study is procured and laid before them, may, from that very circumstance, from leaving no difficulty to be encountered in the pursuit, cause a remission of their industry. It is not uncommon to see young artists, whilst they are struggling with every obstacle in their way, exert themselves with such success as to outstrip competitors possessed of every means of improvement. The promising expectation which was formed, on so much being done with so little means, has recommended them to a patron who has supplied them with every convenience of study; from that time their industry and eagerness of pursuit have forsaken them; they stand still and see others rush on before them.

Such men are like certain animals, who will feed only when there is but little provender, and that got at with difficulty through the bars of a rack, but refuse to touch it when there is an abundance before them.

Among the first moral qualities, therefore, which a student ought to cultivate, is a just and manly confidence in himself or rather in the effects of that persevering industry which he is resolved to possess.

3. Gainsborough

In temperament and manner of life, Gainsborough stands in sharp contrast to Reynolds. Sir Joshua was ever mindful of the conventionalities; he bore himself with dignity, as befitted an artist who upheld the "grand manner." His habits were those of moderation and his daily program was ordered so systematically that it became routine. Gainsborough, on the contrary, was an erratic sort of man, who seems not always to have been the master of his moods. Portraits were begun which were never finished; some change would sweep over him, causing loss of interest in his subject or some idle remark of the sitter would cause offense or break the spell of his intention. He fell out with the position given one of his paintings at the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy and would never send his work thither again. It was not unusual for him to break with his friends. Those who persevered with him must have found it necessary to overlook periods of unevenness and irritability. He painted when the mood caught him but love of music often led him from his regular work and he is known to have handed over a masterpiece for a song that pleased him. In short, Gainsborough was temperamental to a degree and incapable of holding himself to such arduous routine as Titian, for example.

Thomas Gainsborough was born in Sudbury, in 1727, when Reynolds was four years old. His father was a clothier. His mother seems to have been a woman of good breeding and substantial family. The boy early showed ability to draw and when fourteen years old was sent to London to study painting. He had only indifferent teachers. When eighteen, he returned home and soon after married Margaret Burr, said to have been the natural daughter of a nobleman. Their domestic life appears to have been happy and his wife's frugality and even disposition did much to alleviate the friction of daily problems for so erratic an artist. However, the two daughters born to them became mentally deranged and the mother lost her mind before her death.

Gainsborough took up his residence in Ipswich after his marriage. None of his important pictures were done during this first period. Later, at the recommendation of his friend Thicknesse, he removed to Bath, a favorite watering place for Londoners. He remained here until he was forty-seven years of age and it has sometimes been said that had he never left Bath for London, his work would not have been substantially different. From the first his portraits were much in demand and he was able to obtain excellent prices for them.

In 1744 he went to London, where the remainder of his life was spent. His reputation was now firmly established and change of residence did not interrupt his commissions. In 1788, he died suddenly after a brief illness.

Such are the outstanding events in the life of Gainsborough, who has been called the most English of English artists. This characterization has been given him because he seemed to owe little to foreign artists and nothing to contemporary painters. He was largely self-taught and his style was his own.

In youth, he liked nothing better than to paint pictures of rural England and he and Wilson laid the foundations of English landscape painting. At the time, the demand was great for portraiture and little attention had been given yet to the representation of natural scenery. Some of his critics feel that Gainsborough would have achieved more had he confined himself to this branch of painting; but the time had not arrived wherein an artist without independent means could do this in England. The seventeenth century Dutch landscapists had done so, to be sure, but most of them filled paupers' graves.

Gainsborough was happy in his full-length portraits, of which several are ranked with the masterpieces of modern art. Many of his portraits were in three-quarters length, as, for example, his famous likeness of the actress, Mrs. Siddons. Among his full-length portraits, the *Blue Boy, Mrs. Graham* and the *Duchess of Devonshire* are familiar. One of his most charming pictures is the portrait of Perdita Robinson, the beautiful actress, who played with Garrick in *A Winter's Tale,* capturing the heart of the Prince

of Wales—afterwards George VI—by her presentation of Perdita's rôle. Unfortunately for her happiness, she was persuaded to abandon the stage, only to be cast off by this dissolute prince when the novelty of her charms had passed.

The Morning Walk is another of Gainsborough's extraordinary successes. Of the effect of his removal to London and of his talents, his biographer says: "That he afterwards created works of greater beauty was presumably not the effect of his settlement in the metropolis, but merely of the continuance of the natural development of his genius; to the very end of his career he continued to profit by the lessons of greater experience; his touch constantly grew more free, more feathery, his pigment more transparent, his insight into character more rapid and sure."[1]

It was a matter of importance in the art world when, after the World War, the famous *Blue Boy* was brought to America to be one of the great treasures of the Huntington Gallery, in California.

Other important portraitists of the age were George Romney (1734-1802); Raeburn (1756-1823); and Lawrence (1769-1830). Of these, Romney was probably most gifted. His popularity threatened for a while to eclipse that of Reynolds. Raeburn, a Scotch painter, gives evidence of close study of Velasquez. Lawrence, youngest of the three, brought to an end this line of accomplished painters of portraits. To be sure, others have continued the art but with no such signal success as these in the field of English art.

[1] Rothchild: *Gainsborough*, 77.

4. English Landscapists

In his admirable treatise on the development of modern landscape painting, Lewis Hind has summarized its origins in a few sentences that give the substance of the whole matter. We can do no better than to give his own words:

"There is no real division between landscape and figure or subject painting; there is no absolute Father. Some felt Nature more than others; with a few the feeling became a passion. Landscape painting had no independent growth. It was invented by figure painters. At first a rivulet, it became, in course of time, a broad river. Landscape painting developed as men grew more curious about natural phenomena. But this branch of art was for centuries a Cinderella. The figure, the group, usually for the purpose of explaining the unlearned the teachings of the church, was the focus of medieval and renaissance art. Landscape was used only when the subject compelled its employment; not Nature herself, but Nature symbolized and at peace. . . . Very slowly landscape painting won its way. . . . The painters were often told by their patrons what to do, and landscape only intruded when the theme demanded it—such as St. Francis Preaching to the Birds, St. Jerome in the Wilderness, the Baptism of Christ, the Flight into Egypt. Painters with a bias towards landscape made the most of such subjects, and so Giotto becomes the Father of western Landscape Painting, not because he was particularly interested in nature but because he was a great artist and was occasionally called upon to paint a subject which demanded a landscape setting."[1]

In our consideration of the growth of painting in lands beyond the Alps, we have touched upon the beginnings of landscape painting among Flemish artists, have seen the uses made of natural settings by the Van Eycks, and Memling and, again, have noticed the important work done by Pieter Brueghel. Hind calls Rubens the Father of Modern Landscape Painting but admits that at least ten artists have been given that appellation by as many critics. Rubens' *Autumn, with a View of the Castle de Steen* and

Going to Market testify not only to his interest in this branch of painting, but to his mastery of it.

Rembrandt's interest was overwhelmingly in his portraits; yet he painted nearly a score of landscapes in golden browns. His famous *Mill* was purchased for the Widener Collection of Philadelphia for the amazing sum of five hundred thousand dollars, in 1911—a sum which has been estimated to be greater than that received by all the great Dutch painters of the seventeenth century for all their productions combined.

Coming to the French school, Poussin's devotion to the ancients led him to pursue classical themes rather than to represent natural scenery for itself alone. However, there are many who would hold a thesis for Claude as Father of the modern landscape.

Finally, it is plain that one who would trace the growth of landscape painting with any degree of completeness must be willing to review the whole subject of modern painting. Indeed, it is necessary to investigate the delicate backgrounds of miniatures, which adorn hand-illuminated books; to examine the art of the wood carver as well as that of the sculptor of marble and bronze. As we have repeatedly seen, every age builds on what has gone before and there is little so "modern" but that its beginnings may be discovered in what is old.

Coming to the subject in hand, the English landscapists, Wilson was one of the earliest. His inspiration came from Italy and he was greatly influenced by Claude.

Richard Wilson (1714-1782) delighted in depicting natural scenery but, regrettably, there was little demand for landscape paintings in his day. Though neglected in his own age, he has received more attention in ours. His *River Wye* and *Landscape with Bathers* show him at his best.

Gainsborough found greater pleasure in painting scenery than in making portraits, although few would consider him more accomplished in that capacity. Unlike Wilson, he was thoroughly English and remained uninfluenced by foreign art. After his death, forty unsold landscapes were found in his studio. The *Market Cart* is his most famous landscape although hardly his best. In any detailed

account of the Englishmen who centered their attention upon landscape painting, it would be necessary to include John Crome (1768-1821). He is generally known as "Old Crome," to distinguish him from his son. The *Slate Quarries* is one of his great pictures. We have noticed, in connection with Hobbema, how Crome held the Dutch painter in highest esteem.

The two great painters of landscape, in the English school, are Constable, the realist, and Turner, the dreamer.

John Constable (1776-1837) painted what he saw and, in the words of Hind, was "one of the first to attempt to represent the look of nature." He is remembered as first to sweep the academic "brown tree" into the discard and to go into the open to paint instead of following the time honored custom of making sketches in the fields and painting the picture in the studio. This seems amusing to us today, but it will be remembered that when Corot and other members of the Barbizon school, who owed much to Constable, attempted to exhibit their pictures of green trees and landscapes done out of doors at the Royal Academy in Paris, they were relegated to the annex—the "room of the rejected."

It is not too much to say that French painting was revolutionized by Constable. "What, then, had Constable done? Why did his *Hay-Wain* arouse artistic France and create a division in the school of landscape painting? Because at that time art in France was still slumbering in classical swathing bands; because Constable performed the old legerdemain of a return to Nature. This simple gesture has always succeeded; it always will pay. Constable merely expressed himself as if there had never been a painter before him: he merely painted the meadows and streams, the trees and the cottages about his father's mills. He refused to believe that nature was the color of an old Cremona fiddle. Instead, he put the fiddle upon a green lawn, laughed, and went on his way painting pictures showing that grass may be green and skies blue; that the sun shines, rain wets, wind blows, leaves quiver."

Because Constable painted what he saw and what anyone may see provided he looks about him with his own eyes

and does not attempt to interpret nature through a study of paintings made of it by others, he is generally understood and generally admired. Popularity came to him immediately. Far different was it with his illustrious contemporary, Turner, now acclaimed the greatest landscape painter the world has seen.

One who enters upon a study of Turner should resolve at the outset to forget all about the man and concern himself only with his productions. He was the son of a London barber, "born of a chatty father and a half-crazed mother." He seemed to have inherited idiosyncrasies from both. Never having enjoyed educational or cultural advantages, he remained throughout life unaffected by much that is ordinarily taken for granted. He was a recluse and at last slipped away from the few friends who struggled to keep touch with him, dying in lodgings which he took under an assumed name to escape detection. It is plain that such a personal life would have little to reward us for our investigation.

On the other hand, Turner gave himself over exclusively to his art and it is in his art that we are to find all of him that is worth our knowing. His productivity was simply enormous. His work was given to the English nation and two huge volumes were needed merely to list his oil paintings, water-colors and drawings, which, finished and unfinished, number about nineteen thousand. Of this incredible number, the vast majority are merely studies which have interest for the artist alone. Still, Turner's completed work was prodigious.

The eccentric painter bequeathed his work to the English nation on condition that it should be exhibited in an annex added to the National Gallery, to be known as the Turner Gallery. A few years ago the new Turner Gallery was opened to the public. It proved impossible to make it a part of the National Gallery but it is certain that Turner would be satisfied with the splendid quarters which have been provided for his treasures. Some of his work remains in the National Gallery—notably the two pictures which he presented during his life with the stipulation that they should hang between Claude's *Marriage of Isaac and*

Rebecca and the *Embarkation of the Queen of Sheba.* Turner was ever envious of Claude's reputation as a painter of landscape and he was convinced that in his *Sun Rising Through Vapour* and *Dido Building Carthage* he had proved himself the more accomplished. By exhibiting these pictures between the masterpieces of the great Claude he believed others would be convinced of his own superiority.

It is safe to say that the vast majority of those who have looked upon these four remarkable paintings turn away with the conviction that each artist was supreme in his own domain and that neither of them suffers by comparison.

A burning desire to excel all other painters of landscape led Turner to produce a considerable number of paintings and water colors of such a nature that anyone immediately grasps their meaning—cite, for example, the famous *Fighting Téméraire.* The story of the painting is familiar. Members of the Academy Club were on their way to Greenwich for their annual outing. Their steamer passed the *Téméraire,* being pulled along by a noisy little tug, on its way to sea to be destroyed, its days of usefulness over. The battleship had been launched in 1798 and seven years after had been second ship in Nelson's division at the Battle of Trafalgar. For the woe she dealt the enemy, her soldiers had dubbed her the *Fighting Téméraire.* "There is a subject for you, Turner!" exclaimed one of his companions. And so conception of the painting was born.

In addition to such pictures as the *Approach to Venice* and scores of others wherein the subject is obvious, in spite of Turner's individual coloring, the artist painted any number for his own interest solely, to satisfy the urge within him to experiment in the portrayal of light in its manifold degrees.

Some of the difficulties encountered by the average person—almost any of us—in an attempt to understand many of Turner's productions would disappear if we could but grasp the underlying truth that he was not seeking to represent fact but effect. To take a concrete example, let us assume for the moment that he chose to place upon his

canvas a bit of wharf, a bridge, and the river with a ship or two upon it. Constable would have painted just that, in so masterly a way and with such realistic coloring that the dullest might grasp the theme instantly. Such was the last result Turner desired to attain. He was interested only in the appearance of these objects when flooded with dull or bright light. On a dark day, seen through fog or mist, the contours of objects disappear and only bulk and color remain. Under a glowing sunset the objects are transformed into something so marvellous that only the poet and the painter can hope to catch something of their beauty.

Turner's method of painting was revolutionary and some critics go so far as to say that little has been discovered since his time that he did not anticipate and test out. Innovators in the field of art almost always are decried in their own generation and Turner was no exception to the rule. His work was a perennial source of wit for those who did not understand him and even Thackeray joined the chorus of derision. An English publication went so far as to say that only a lobster salad provided a combination of color rivaling one of his pictures and whether it were called "Venice" or "Morning" or "Noon" or "Night," one might see in it whatever he chose. Ruskin, almost alone, championed his cause. Indeed, it might be questioned whether Turner did not suffer to some extent for the lavish and ill-grounded adulation of the great writer. Ruskin's admiration for Turner was well placed but often his reasons and line of argument weakened his contention. For instance, Ruskin called Turner's *Slave Ship* one of his greatest creations and claimed that the artist's enduring fame might rest on it alone. George Inness reversed his verdict in no uncertain terms, calling it the "most infernal piece of clap-trap ever painted." This painting is now in America, "with its sharks, its huddle of bodies manacled and writhing in the water, and the iron chains floating on the surface as if they were corks."

Turner spared no pains to study nature in her variable forms. On one occasion he had himself bound to the mast and braved the tempest for several hours that he might know the sea in a blinding snow storm and when his de-

tractors said of his painting, *The Snowstorm* that it was only suds and whitewash, he merely stormed that he wished they might have been there to see for themselves—doubtless a sufficient retaliation.

Probably no other painter suffers so much as Turner in a black and white print, for color is the very essence of his work. He painted about two hundred oils which are remarkable, each in its way. For every oil, he produced a hundred water colors, done largely to satisfy himself—odd bits, done here and there. He roamed through England, Scotland and Wales, visited Switzerland and Italy, making endless sketches wherever he went. Only in the last few years have a considerable number of his so-called "unfinished" water colors been exhibited, although, as has been observed, a picture was finished when he had done with it.

In view of Turner's enormous production and his evolution in his art, it is idle to attempt to characterize his style. To know him means years of attention to his pictures, not to opinions of others about him. Fortunately, many of his paintings are in this country and almost all the large art museums exhibit one or more of them.

ON THE PLEASURE OF PAINTING

By Hazlitt

"THERE is a pleasure in painting which none but painters know." In writing you have to contend with the world; in painting, you have only to carry on a friendly strife with Nature. You sit down to your task and are happy. From the moment that you take up the pencil, and look Nature in the face, you are at peace with your own heart. No angry passions rise to disturb the silent progress of the work, to shake the hand, or dim the brow; no irritable humours are set afloat: you have no absurd opinions to combat, no point to strain, no adversary to crush, no fool to annoy—you are actuated by fear or favour to no man. There is "no juggling here," no sophistry, no intrigue, no tampering with the evidence, no attempt to make black white or white black: but you resign yourself into the hands of a greater power, that of Nature, with the simplicity of a child, and the devotion of an enthusiast—"study with joy her manner, and with rapture taste her style." The mind is calm and full at the same time. The hand and the eye are equally employed. In tracing the commonest object, a plant or the stump of a tree, you learn something every moment. You preceive unexpected differences, and discover likenesses where you looked for no such thing. You try to set down what you see—find your error, and correct it. You need not play tricks, or purposely mistake; with all your pains, you are still far short of the mark. Patience grows out of the endless pursuit, and turns it into a luxury. A streak in a flower, a wrinkle in a leaf, a tinge in a cloud, a stain in an old wall or ruin grey, are seized with avidity, as the *spolia opima* of this sort of mental warfare, and furnish out labour for another half day. The hours pass away untold, without chagrin, and without weariness; nor would you ever wish to pass them otherwise. Innocence is joined with industry, pleasure with

business; and the mind is satisfied, though it is not engaged in thinking or in doing any mischief. . . .

One is never tired of painting, because you have to set down not what you knew already, but what you have just discovered. There is a continual creation out of nothing going on. With every stroke of the brush, a new field of inquiry is laid open; new difficulties arise, and new triumphs are prepared over them. By comparing the imitation with the original, you see what you have done and how much you have still to do. The test of the senses is severer than that of fancy and an over-match even for the delusions of our self-love. One part of a picture shames another, and you determine to paint up to yourself, if you cannot come up to nature. Every object becomes lustrous from the light thrown back upon it by the mirror of art; and by the aid of the pencil we may be said to touch and handle the objects of sight. The air-drawn visions that hover on the verge of existence have a bodily presence given them on the canvas: the form of beauty is changed into a substance: the dream and the glory of the universe is made "palpable to feeling as to sight."—And see! a rainbow starts from the canvas, with all its humid train of glory, as if it were drawn from its cloudy arch in heaven. The spangled landscape glitters with drops of dew after the shower. The "fleecy fools" show their coats in the gleam of the setting sun. The shepherds pipe their farewell notes in the fresh evening air. And is this bright vision made from a dead dull blank, like a bubble reflecting the mighty fabric of the universe? Who would think this miracle of Rubens' pencil possible to be performed? Who, having seen it, would not spend his life to do the like? See how the rich fallows, the bare stubble field, the scanty harvest-home, drag in Rembrandt's landscapes! How often have I looked at them and nature, and tried to do the same, till the very "light thickened" and there was an earthiness in the feeling of the air! There is no end of the refinements of art and nature in this respect. One may look at the misty glimmering horizon till the eye dazzles and the imagination is lost, in hopes to transfer the whole interminable expanse at one blow upon canvas. Wilson said, he used to try to paint the effect of the motes

dancing in the setting sun. At another time, a friend, coming into his painting-room when he was sitting on the ground in a melancholy posture, observed that his picture looked like a landscape after a shower: he started up with the greatest delight, and said, "That is the effect I intended to produce but thought I had failed." . . .

The painter learns to look at nature with different eyes. He before saw her "as in a glass darkly but now face to face." He understands the texture and meaning of the visible universe, and "sees into the life of things," not by the help of mechanical instruments but of the improved exercise of his faculties, and an intimate sympathy with nature. The meanest thing is not lost upon him, for he looks at it with an eye to itself, not merely to his own vanity or interest or the opinion of the world. Even where there is neither beauty nor use—if that ever were—still there is truth, and a sufficient source of gratification in the indulgence of curiosity and activity of mind. The humblest scholar is a true scholar; and the best of scholars—the scholar of nature. For myself, and for the real comfort and satisfaction of the thing, I had rather have been Jan Steen or Gerard Dow than the greatest casuist or philologer that ever lived. The painter does not view things in the clouds or "mist, the common gloss of theologians" but applies the same standard of truth and disinterested spirit of inquiry, that influence his daily practice, to other subjects. He perceives form, he distinguishes character. He reads men and books with an intuitive eye. He is a critic as well as a connoisseur. The conclusions he draws are clear and convincing, because they are taken from the things themselves. He is not a fanatic, a dupe, or a slave; for the habit of seeing for himself also disposes him to judge for himself. . . .

Besides the exercise of the mind, painting exercises the body. It is a mechanical as well as a liberal art. To do anything, to dig a hole in the ground, to plant a cabbage, to hit a mark, to move a shuttle, to work a pattern—in a word, an attempt to produce any effect, and to *succeed,* has something in it that gratifies the love of power and carries off the restless activity of the mind of man. Indolence is a de-

lightful but a distressing state. Action is no less necessary than thought to the instinctive tendencies of the human frame; and painting combines them both incessantly. The hand furnishes a practical test of the correctness of the eye; and the eye, thus admonished, imposes fresh tasks of skill and industry upon the hand. Every stroke tells, as the verifying of a new truth; and every new observation, the instant it is made, passes into an act and emanation of the will. Every step is nearer what we wish, and yet there is always more to do. . . . Rubens, with his florid, rapid style, complained that when he had just learned his art, he should be forced to die. Leonardo, in the slow advances of his, had lived long enough.

Painting is not, like writing, what is properly understood by a sedentary employment. It requires not indeed a strong but a continued and steady exertion of muscular power. The precision and delicacy of the manual operation makes up for want of vehemence. Painting for a whole morning gives one as excellent an appetite for one's dinner as old Abraham Tucker required for his by riding over Banstead Downs. It is related of Sir Joshua Reynolds that "he took no other exercise than what he used in his painting-room"—the writer means, in walking backwards and forwards to look at his picture; but the act of painting itself, of laying on the colors in the proper place and proper quantity, was a much harder exercise than this alternate receding from and returning to the picture. This last would be rather a relaxation and relief than an effort. It is not to be wondered at that an artist like Sir Joshua, who delighted so much in the sensual and practical part of his art, should have found himself at a considerable loss when the decay of his sight prevented him, for the last year or two of his life, from the following up of his profession,—"the source," according to his own remark, "of thirty years' uninterrupted enjoyment and prosperity to him."

VII

RUSSIAN PAINTING

THE study of Russian art falls into two periods. From the tenth century to the eighteenth, it presents a predominatingly religious art based on Byzantine traditions. With the rule of Peter the Great (1689-1725), Russian art becomes secular and falls under the influence of western European schools. In either case Russia was spared the painful stages of groping for new forms and the baby lisp of primitives learning to express themselves: both in the tenth century and in the eighteenth, Russia came into the direct heritage of art forms that had matured and ripened in the course of centuries of growth and travail. For this reason Russian art of whatever period gives the impression of sureness, of fresh and bold youth but not of raw and quaking infancy. Furthermore, in its isolation from the rest of the civilized world, Russia has managed to preserve and cultivate the Byzantine traditions for many centuries after these had vanished in western Europe. It has thus guarded and fostered the legacy of ancient Greece, tempered by the spirit of the Orient, and it has combined these elements with the art of western Europe, when in modern times it turned its face westward.

Little is known of the art of Russia before its conversion to Christianity (988). Recent excavations and investigations have thus far helped us only to realize the bewildering complexity of the subject. Suffice it to say that the Slav settlers of the southern part of Russia (about the fifth century A. D.) found there a variety of cultural survivals, from Cretan and Mycenæan to those of Central Asia. During the seventh and sixth centuries B. C., Greek colonies flourished in South Russia, in the Crimea, on the coasts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. Greek ideas and modes of living spread along the Russian rivers and down into the Caucasus. We have a record of the town of Olvia

acquiring, in the fourth century B. C., a statue by the great Praxiteles for the municipal square! Later the Greeks collided with Cimmerians, Sarmatians, and Scythians, the latter proving victorious and superimposing their arts and crafts upon those of the Hellenes. Before the arrival of the Slavs that territory had been invaded by the Goths, from the west (second century A. D.), and by the Huns, from the east (fourth century A. D.), who brought from Eastern Turkestan the so-called "animal style." It can be seen from this brief account what a variety of cultural influences the land of Russia had undergone before it fell under the sway of Byzantine culture with the introduction of Greek Catholic Christianity.

1. Byzantine Periods

What is this Byzantine art, whose effect on all European art, and especially on that of Russia, is becoming universally recognized? The effort of Alexander the Great to Hellenize the East was not a complete success: Grecianized Asia Minor presented not a pure Hellenic culture, but rather a bastard offshoot, known as Hellenistic. With the establishment of Constantinople as the capital of Eastern Rome and of Eastern Christianity, an impetus was given to the merging of those European and Asiatic elements which the new metropolis tried to link, by virtue of its geographical and political situation. Byzantine art resulted, a marvellous combination of Christianity and Hellenism, of the spirit of western Europe with that of Hellenized Asia Minor and Egypt, of Persia and Arabia, a combination in which Greek realism and sense of proportion were wedded to Oriental mysticism and fancy of ornament and design. The first great achievement of Byzantine art, the church of St. Sophia in Constantinople, demonstrated this happy combination most effectively. Its cardinal feature, the dome, which became the source of inspiration and emulation for Christian architecture, was in itself an Asiatic importation.

The synthetic quality of Byzantinism found a grateful soil in Russia, a land which has been geographically and historically also a link between Asia and Europe, and which has experienced a complex variety of influences. The conversion of Russia coincided with the second great period in the development of Byzantine art (X-XII centuries), and the Russian churches and their interiors of that time bear the best marks of contemporary Byzantium. Unfortunately, the Tartar invasions of the thirteenth century and the teeth of time have destroyed the greater part of Russia's early Christian art. The only mosaics of that period have been more or less adequately preserved in some of the Kiev churches. The "indestructible wall" in the Kiev cathedral of St. Sophia, presents a monumental mosaic figure of the Virgin, with other sacred figures and groups. These and the other Kiev mosaics of the eleventh century possess the

characteristic traits of contemporary Byzantine mosaics—a solemn rigidity, a harshness of line and color, an absence of details, and, withal, a monumental majesty and a powerful rhythm in the distribution of the conventionalized figures and the color spots.

Frescoes, a less expensive mural decoration, were considerably more numerous in early Russia than mosaics, and a greater number of them has been preserved both in the churches of Kiev and in those of Novgorod, the rival city of the north. Like the mosaics, the frescoes of that period are strictly Byzantine in character, even though they might have been executed not by Constantinople masters but by Armenian and Georgian painters, aided by Russian apprentices. In the second half of the twelfth century, the political center was shifted from Kiev to the northeast, and the city of Vladimir, in the Suzdal province, grew in power, and began to attract builders and decorators. The Vladimir cathedral of St. Dmitri is not only one of the most magnificent edifices of the time, but it contains frescoes of a mastery which gives them a unique place in contemporary Russia. It is only in 1919, that part of these frescoes were discovered beneath layers of later additions.

In this connection it should be noted that the study of Russia's religious painting is quite recent and incomplete. Most of the original works have been covered up, in the course of centuries, by additional layers of paint, or even whitewash. Especially grave was the vandalism practised in regard to the most widespread group of religious painting, the portable icon. The ancient Greeks employed the art of encaustic, and it has come down to us in some Hellenistic portraits found in Egyptian tombs. The Byzantine and Russian icon is derived from the encaustic method: it was painted on a panel, after the background had been scooped and grooved and covered with a liquid glue and with cement as a basis for the painting which was usually done in tempera. The finished image was varnished with an oily surface, known as *olifa,* for the preservation of the colors. Saturated with the soot and smoke of candles and censers, this surface grew dark in the course of time and

required periodic cleaning and renovation. The renovators often added features of their own time, so that eventually the icon was buried under numerous layers of *olifa* and attempted "improvements." In recent years special commissions of experts have been engaged in the extremely delicate work of restoring frescoes and icons to their original state. Their work has already given startling results, and one may anticipate that the further rehabilitation of Russia's old masterpieces will prove epoch-making in the history of art.

Thus far I have sketched the early period of Russia's mosaic, fresco, and icon, when these were strictly Byzantine, only faintly revealing here and there a native Russian note. During the first half of the thirteenth century Russia fell under the yoke of the invading Tartars, which lasted two hundred and fifty years, resulting in the country's comparative backwardness and isolation from the civilized world. In 1240, Ghengis Khan's hordes destroyed Kiev, Russia's center of culture, which was not to recover till the seventeenth century. The southern and central principalities were devastated, and the population so terrorized and oppressed that the survivors had no energy or leisure for any spiritual interests. The political center gradually moved over to Moscow, whose astute princes managed even under the Tartar domination to consolidate the torn members of the national organism into a formidable state, throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Yet culturally Moscow yielded for a long time to the supremacy of its great rival, the city republic of Novgorod. Situated in the northwest of what was then the territory of Russia, Novgorod remained outside the immediate pale of the Tartar invasion, and, save for a certain tribute, it hardly knew the hardships of the Tartar régime. Because of its western position the city became a member of the Hanseatic league, grew wealthy, metropolitan, and more civilized than any other Russian city. Indeed, Novgorod was regarded as the cultural center of the East, and in some respects as the heir to Constantinople. The exuberant Novgorodians expressed their energy and vitality in an outpour of a truly national, because anonymous, activity along the lines of architecture

and painting at home and abroad. Novgorod masters decorated the palace walls of Tartar khans, the Greek Orthodox churches of the East, and even the Roman Catholic cathedral of the Holy Cross in Poland's ancient capital, Cracow.

Novgorodian frescoes and icons of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, made accessible to the eye in recent years, reveal a mature art which combines the best Byzantine traditions with a wholesome native simplicity and sincerity. This was the period of the final flare up of Byzantium, under the Paleologue emperors, when in the face of the oncoming Turkish menace Constantinople seemed to make a desperate effort to display the most splendid colors of its setting sun. The Constantinople renaissance found a contemporaneous echo in Morea, Old Serbia, the Caucasus, and also in remote Novgorod, where it assumed a decided native aspect. The troubled melancholy of a moribund race, which peers from the eyes of Byzantine faces, gives place in the Russian icon and fresco to a solemn sadness almost festive in its tranquillity. The austere severity is softened by a Slav naïveté, the imperious Christ "pantokrator" of the Byzantine tradition gradually passes into the Man of Sorrows, the Russian Christ of Dostoyevsky's conception. Not that the subjects are nationalized by means of realistic Russian types introduced into religious painting. The essence of this art consists in its remoteness from visible reality; every feature is highly conventionalized. The painter aims at achieving utter unearthliness, and he spurns everyday conceptions of form, beauty, or dimension. He has a vision of infinity and eternity, beyond space and time, and he strives to transport the spectator into this new reality. The anatomically incorrect Virgins and saints, with their unnaturally elongated figures draped in fantastic robes, with their immobile faces and pensive, almost introverted eyes, breathe a graceful serenity decidedly not of this world. Similarly the background, those non-existing architectural designs, impossible trees and landscapes, symmetrical Hellenistic monticules, fail to bring the subject closer to earth, but, on the contrary, they help to create a pathos of distance, to renounce the world of appearances,

and to assume a worshipful attitude undistracted by material verisimilitudes.

The hushed solemnity of the Novgorod icon and fresco is undisturbed by obvious dramatism or gushing emotionalism. The artist's vision and prayerful ardor are so irresistibly communicative chiefly because of the reserved, perfect form he achieves. He has kept the purest classical traditions, in his sense of harmony, the flow of his lines and the balance of his masses which produce the effect of suspended movement and dynamic stability. He employs the laconic linearity of ancient Greek vases, the architectural designs of Pompeian frescoes, the reverse perspective of Hellenistic miniatures, the light and shadow effects of Alexandrine impressionists. The very technique of the icon is, as already mentioned, a development of Greek encaustic. But the Russian, even more than the Byzantine, subtilizes the classic heritage by an admixture of the mystic imagination of the Orient and its feeling for design. He blends these two determining elements of our civilization with his native propensities, and attains a form which is superb in its simplicity. His composition has an inner continuity, completeness, and self-sufficiency. There is a suggestion of the three dimensional illusion, to be sure, but it must be placed between the depth of Western perspective and the Oriental flatness; it is more what a low relief is in sculpture. The use of the line for the simultaneous expression of volume and design, and the unrivalled skill in employing the silhouette, lend the composition an architectural strength and gracefulness. The Novgorod fresco and icon are hardly thinkable without their living force—their color, which is never used fortuitously but possesses the same inner necessity as the line for bringing the artist's purpose to consummation. They remind one of antique frescoes in the striking individuality of their colors, though it goes without saying that the Russians combine a greater variety of color than the ancients knew. This they do by means of bold juxtaposition, not by the transition of one color into another, thus displaying a multiplicity of color with a tonal uniformity. In this respect, among others, the Novgorod masters may serve as a bridge between our

ultra modernists and the Greek painters, and perhaps even the palæolithic savage tracing a bison on the wall of his cave.

The peak of Novgorod art is reached in the work of Andrey Rublev, some of whose magnificent frescoes were discovered as late as 1918. His *Trinity,* painted about 1408, may be regarded as the sublimation of art to a harmonious union of Hellenism and Christianity. The monk's ardent faith is poured into the reserved form of classic antiquity, superbly reflected in the icon's simple and powerful composition (suggesting a circle, the symbol of infinity, divided into three vertical planes, to symbolize trinity—tri-unity), in the rhythm of its echoing lines, of the heads, the monticules, the tree, the architectural design, in the color gamut of the robes softly radiating against a pale gold background. One cannot escape the contagious effect of repose and tranquillity emanating from the gentle faces bent in contemplation, from the graceful *ensemble* of Rublev's vision. Severe simplicity mollified by native gentleness is a characteristic trait of fifteenth century Novgorod icons, in which Rublev's influence is unmistakably evident. The unknown author of the *Descent from the Cross* has mastered his complex and perilous task by means of balance and rhythm in complementing and echoing lines and colors. He deepens the dramatism of the event by withholding its effusion; the grief is reserved, the gestures arrested in a single effort centered on the curved body of the Crucified. This grief is given vent in the *Entombment,* an icon painted probably by the same master. But here too not a single loud note disturbs the atmosphere of divine solemnity. The mourners sorrow quietly, and even the uplifted arms of the woman in bright red, who is unable to contain her grief, carries no dissonance, for this gesture is softly repeated by the running lines of the hillocks (monticules) in the background. As in the *Descent,* the whole movement tends in the direction of the center of the drama, the Crucified, and it is consummated in the supreme tenderness of the Mother's cheek caressing the pale cheek of her Son.

Toward the end of the fifteenth century, Novgorod art displays a maturity that is symptomatic of approaching

decadence. Its swan song rings powerfully in the work of Master Dionysy. The recently revealed frescoes at the Ferapont Monastery, painted by him in 1500-1501, show a Russian Giotto, continuing and perfecting in his composition and color those Byzantine traditions which the great Italian embodied in his Paduan frescoes. Dionysy attains an unsurpassed majesty and elegance in his elongated figures, classically reserved yet vibrant with divine jubilation. After him comes the inevitable descent to virtuosity, narrative detail, illustration. Novgorod succumbs to Moscow. The autocracy of the Russian tsars destroys the last vestiges of freedom and initiative, and lays its heavy stamp on every phase of national life. Iconography becomes strictly regulated by the church, craftmanship triumphs over artistry, vulgar ornamentation in gold, silver and other metals stifles the pure simplicity of the icon, and a prosaic outlook supplants the joyous other-worldliness of the Novgorodians who combined strength with sincerity, religiosity with rhythm, vision with proportion.

During the seventeenth century western influences penetrated Russia in an ever increasing measure, preparing the soil for the Europeanizing reform of Peter the Great. Unfortunately those early influences were of a dubious quality, since they came through such secondary channels as Poland and the Ukraine. Western traditions of painting began to affect the Russians, and while they did not supplant the Byzantine traditions in religious painting completely, they adulterated them and resulted in a hybrid product. The leading painter of that period, Simon Ushakov (1626-1686), had a large school of followers and imitators, who possessed considerable skill and understanding of the human body, but who failed to produce a single work that would come up to the level of Rublev or Dionysy in mastery and spiritual grandeur. The passing of the Novgorod period meant the completion of the golden age in Russian painting and its loss of a leading place among the Russian arts, which it has not been able to reclaim to this day.

2. Modern Painting

In the last two centuries Russian art developed along the lines indicated by the imperious gesture of Peter the Great—Western lines. Religious painting came to a standstill, and the long and valuable experience of iconography poured into the channel of secular art. It took, however, several generations for this new art to rid itself of the trammels of imitativeness and become national and independent. The works of the eighteenth century, for the most part allegories and pseudo-classic concoctions, deserve no attention, with the exception of the portraits. In this field the Russians have excelled to this day, showing (as they do in their literature) an unrivalled aptness for a keen psychologic appraisal of their sitters and for bringing out their essential traits. Among the pompous and sterile canvases of the eighteenth century it is a joy to distinguish the portraits by Leviosky, Borovikovsky, Kiprensky, and a few others, whose aristocratic ladies and grandees are not only intensely alive individuals, but they also typify their class and their time—the age of wit, elegance, and innocent depravity. The portraitists proved precocious disciples of the West, and soon they invaded the dominion of their teachers. When Kiprensky (1783-1836) presented his portraits to the Academy of Naples, this institution suspected that they were the works of Rubens and Van Dyke, and rejected them as a hoax, declaring indignantly that it would not permit "to be deceived in such an impudent manner." Kiprensky was the first Russian painter to be honored by the Academy of Florence with a request for his self-portrait to be hung in the room of self-portraits by prominent artists at the Uffizi gallery.

As elsewhere in Europe, the Academy played a baneful rôle in Russia, stifling initiative and fettering the creative spirit by rigid regulations and "classic" models. To be sure, big men, artists by grace of God, revealed their power even with their pinions clipped by the Academy. Bruni (1800-1875) managed to instil mysticism into his arid canvases, lending a cathedral-like monumentality to such of his compositions as the somewhat theatrical *Brazen*

Serpent. The most important and the most influential of the Academicians was Bryullov (1799-1852), whose significance for Russia may be compared with that of Delacroix for France. Though a pupil and later a leader of the Academy, though a bit artificial in his *Last Day of Pompeii,* the gigantic canvas brought him an all-European renown. Bryullov raised Russian secular painting to an unprecedented height. A master draughtsman and colorist, he used both line and color with a boldness and ease which belied his academism and betrayed the romanticist in him. He was one of the first to foresake the academic studio for the study of nature face to face, and most of his Italian sketches were produced out of doors. In portraiture he was probably at his best, striving after the fusion of psychologic truth and artistic composition. His canvases served for his contemporaries and numerous followers as examples of an art whose chief aim appeared to be the perfection of form, regardless of the subject-matter, of models and rules. He advanced no theories and voiced no novel principles, but instinctively striving to accomplish his artistic purpose, Bryullev provided a refreshing breeze in the stale atmosphere of the Academy.

As in literature, Realism was to become the dominating tendency also in Russian painting. Venetsianov (1779-1847) was the first to depart from mythologic, classic, and romantic subjects, and to introduce boldly such homely themes as cornfields with actual peasants in the foreground. In his footsteps walked the majority of Russia's nineteenth century painters, who emulated their literary confreres in interpreting life realistically, truthfully, without any sugar coating. As might be expected, the high social and moral merit of many realistic paintings was achieved at the expense of their purely artistic value. National conditions in Russia demanded service on the part of all her gifted children, and very few were in a position to overlook the burning public issues, the misery and suffering of the masses, and to devote themselves to pure art. If Russian realistic painting nevertheless possesses a tremendous power and occupies an imminent place in world art, it is because the big painters, like the big writers, escaped being

sheer sermonizers by virtue of their inherent artistic sense.

Some of the highest achievements of realistic painting may be found in the canvases depicting scenes and moments of Russian history. The Russian censor who was relentlessly opposed to a frank exposition of contemporary evils, showed more leniency toward the portrayal of past events. This circumstance may account for the large number of historical themes among Russia's realistic paintings. The versatile and prolific Repin, whose eightieth birthday was celebrated in 1925, seldom reaches such power and mastery as in his *Ivan the Terrible and His Son Ivan,* where his color and composition are as striking as the keenness of his psychologic analysis. Unforgettable is the magnificently placed head of the terrible tsar, who has just killed his son in a moment of rage, and whose mad listless gaze bespeaks all the anguish of a father unable to retrieve his loss and his crime.

In this country Repin is perhaps best known for his *Cossacks,* which was exhibited at the Chicago Exposition of 1893. Amidst an orgy of color he groups his bulky, ruddy, ferocious yet mirthful Cossacks at the moment when they dictate an answer to the Sultan's invitation to serve in his army. The actual document is replete with unprintable epithets, and it suffices to glance at the faces of Repin's Cossacks to imagine the contempt and scorn which they hurl at that dog of an infidel for his impudent proposal to these freebooters of the Greek Orthodox faith.

Among other historical painters one must mention Surikov (1848-1916), the sturdy Siberian, who eclipsed even Repin in such of his works as the *Conquest of Siberia,* the *Execution of the Streltsy,* or the *Lady Morozov.* Surikov found a new gamut of colors, which though gloomy and subdued pulsate with life, light, and one may even say sound. His intuitive rather than scholarly knowledge of his country and people suffuses his historical paintings with a genuine and inimitable Russian spirit, as for example in his *Lady Morozov.* Surikov portrays a living crowd of seventeenth century Muscovites watching the Lady Morozov in

chains being taken to prison, where she was to die shortly afterward together with her sister, for refusing to accept the reformed church liturgy. The officially sanctioned reform split the Orthodox Russians into almost equal halves, and to this day there are millions of so-called Old Believers, the adherents of the old church ceremonies. Surikov shows the fanatical Lady Morozov in the sleigh, raising two fingers to make the sign of the cross, as a protest against the novel regulation to use three fingers for the same purpose. The crowd is not an impersonal vague mob, but a masterly gathering of living, breathing individuals, each one expressing a certain mood or emotion, contempt or sympathy, glee or sorrow. In the right corner of the painting one can see kneeling the Russian "fool," half saint, half idiot, the only person in old Russia who dared to speak the truth. Indeed, one notes that the fool raises two fingers, in defiance of the authorities.

In 1863 there was formed the Society of Wanderers, which united the Realists opposed to the tyranny of the Academy and resolved to acquaint the country with their work by means of wandering exhibitions. The Wanderers commanded the public vogue to the end of the last century, appealing to the average taste with their *genre* pictures, portrayal of contemporary morals and customs, and denunciation of existing forms of oppression and injustice within the limits of what was permitted by the censor. Again, as in the case of literature, the Wanderers preached in a veiled manner a message against the tyrannical régime of the tsars, on behalf of the downtrodden masses. The social value of their canvases was certainly above their artistic significance, which, with a few brilliant exceptions, was rather limited. The brush of even such fine painters as Repin, Makovsky, Perov, Yaroshenko, and others, quaked and floundered when it was brandished with the obvious intention of producing a political or economic pamphlet. Such was the fate of Russia, where in the absence of normal public outlets—a parliament, a free press, free organization of parties and meetings—the suppressed national aspirations and grievances found expression, however muffled, in whatever was creative and articulate.

Mention should be made of those Realists who dedicated their work to some religious or ethical idea. Compared with the great Novgorod art, Russia's religious paintings of the nineteenth century are superior in workmanship, in the realism of their portraiture, anatomy and landscape, in their direct appeal to the average man's senses and emotions. On the other hand, the later artists have lost that inner peace and harmony, that joyous simple faith, that reconciling vision of otherworldliness, which one feels in a Rublev or Dionysy. The moderns are too sophisticated for the naïve acceptance of an absolute faith, they are too much of this world, and they give expression to their inner doubts, conflicts, and contradictions. Most of these were influenced in a measure by Ivanov (1806-1858), one of the last Romanticists, who gave twenty-four years of his life to the consummation of his large picture, *The Appearance of Christ to the People.* Ivanov was a passionate seeker of spiritual values as much as of artistic form. In his Italian sketches he went directly to nature, and showed such a poignant perception of light effects that he may be regarded as a forerunner of the Impressionists. His numerous sketches and drawings (he made over three hundred of these for his main picture) are delightfully free and graceful, which cannot be said of the picture itself. Twenty-four years of work on one canvas could not help robbing it of spontaneous freshness and lending it a stiffness and heaviness. Yet the ideal which imbued Ivanov and sucked all his energy and life served as a beacon for those who came after him. For Ivanov was characteristically Russian in his synthetic quest, in his painful effort to make his appeal all-human and universal, to combine earthliness with spirituality, to reconcile all contradictions and bring forth a harmonious Christ.

One of Ivanov's prominent successors was Gè (1831-1894), who enjoyed the friendship and admiration of the great Tolstoy, owing to the fervent religiosity of his canvases. Gè was an excellent portraitist and a masterful colorist, but he deliberately bridled his love for movement and color, and gave himself to the production of austere canvases with one central all absorbing idea dominating

the painting. In his *Crucifixion,* Christ is intentionally portrayed as externally ugly and unprepossessing, lest the spectator be distracted by physical prettiness from perceiving the inner beauty of His spirit. To emphasize this spiritual beauty emanating from a homely vessel, the painter shows side by side the crucified thieves, whose bodily hideousness is matched by their poverty of spirit. The same austerity, absence of details and accessories, and concentrated unity of purpose, can be seen in Gè's *What Is Truth,* where the fat, self-satisfied Pilate asks this question mockingly of the dishevelled, emaciated, plebeian Christ with the quiet flame of conviction in his weary eyes.

The most striking example of a painter for whom art was entirely subservient to ethical ideas, was furnished by Vereshchagin (1842-1904), known by his paintings all over the world, including this country. An implacable enemy of war and all violence, he had set out to combat these evils by revealing all their repellent traits. He observed battles, rebellions, executions at close range, and finally lost his life on the flagship of the Russian fleet, when it was sunk by a Japanese mine. Thus his life and work were given unreservedly to the championship of the idea of peace. Among his paintings exhibited in this country one will especially recall the group portraying Napoleon's conquest of Moscow, in 1812, and the retreat of his army across the snowfields of vast, unconquerable Russia. He attains some fine effects in his groupings of figures, such as those of the French marshals or the Russian peasant guerrillas, as well as in his use of color—the white of the snowdrifts burying the encamped French, or the lurid red on the faces of Napoleon and his generals watching in dismay the conflagration of Moscow, caused by the Russians themselves. In one picture he shows Napoleon seated in the Cathedral of Assumption, and meditating over "bad news from home," as the painting is called. Above the head of this ambitious world warrior is seen Ushakov's icon of the Prince of Peace: the message is obvious. War is presented by him chiefly in its most horrible aspects—wounds and groans and birds of prey hovering over dead and dying bodies. His fine draughtsmanship and sense of composition and color are

often sacrificed for the "idea." Most conspicuous as a sermon is his picture, the *Apotheosis of War,* which presents a pyramidal heap of human skulls besieged by croaking ravens, with the additional inscription: "Dedicated to all the great conquerors, past, present, and future."

Toward the end of the nineteenth century there arose a natural reaction against sermons and purposes in art, as practiced by the Wanderers. Contemporaneously with western Europe, the Impressionists threw the windows wide open, and let in vivifying breezes and dazzling waves of light. Levitan, Korovin, Serov, Benois, Roerich, Bakst, Somov, Sudeykin, and a host of other rebels against the preachy Wanderers, made big strides in the direction of a creative and sovereign art, independent of the subject-matter and the painter's social or political views. Sergey Dyagilev, known chiefly for his introduction of Russian opera and ballet to the West, organized a society and a magazine under the name of the World of Art *(Mir Iskusstva),* which became a living center for the young generation of artists concerned primarily with form, color, and design. This group fought valiantly, and on the whole successfully, for broadening the horizons of Russian art, for marching abreast of western, especially French currents, and at the same time they fought for the revival of interest in the old masters of iconography and in the portraitists of the eighteenth century. The decorative element began to predominate, as against the superabundance of narrative themes reigning among the Wanderers, and notable achievements were made in this field. This is particularly evident in theatre decoration, where the Russians, chief among them Korovin (born 1861) and Bakst (1866-1925), have opened splendid new vistas, and are still leading the world in this until lately neglected art.

The most remarkable master of that period was undoubtedly Michael Vrubel (1856-1910), whose versatility and consummate skill might rank him with the best men of the Italian renaissance. He displayed an equally joyous freshness and vigor in his landscapes, decorative designs, religious paintings, architectural drawings, stage decorations, portraits, sculpture, as well as in a variety of applied

arts, from ornamental designs for musical instruments to majolica ware. An indefatigable seeker of new avenues in form and color, an experimenter in old and new methods, Vrubel combined in his art the best traits of the Byzantines, the Venetians, the Novgorodians, the moderns, always a virtuoso in composition, in color, in his power to render convincing the remotest mysteries and fantasies. In his church frescoes Vrubel linked the fifteenth century with modernity, and in his fairies, as in the *Princess Swan,* he restored to life the native love for design and color that had been long neglected and shackled.

In connection with this last item, mention should be made of the fact that it was during that same period that Russian folklore drew the attention of a number of prominent painters, notably Vasnetsov (1848-1927), Nesterov (born 1862), and Bilibin (born 1876). An ardent nationalist, Vasnetsov was inspired by Russia's antiquities and legends, and in his turn he inspired a whole group of young painters to make use of national elements in their works. Both in his historical and pre-historical paintings Vasnetsov is prone to idealize his characters, surround them with a halo as it were. His best known picture, *Bogatyri (The Knights),* presents the three most popular legendary heroes of Russia, Ilya of Murom, Dobrynya son of Nikita, and Alyosha the priest's son. The three knights, breathing super-prowess and super-intelligence, and mounted on super-horses, stand at the parting of the roads, about to choose the most difficult direction, where their valor may be most needful in championing the weak and offended against monsters and infidels. Nesterov is a religious romantic, shy and reserved, and he endows his native landscape and national characters with a gentle sadness of great beauty. Bilibin is chiefly known for his colorful illustrations to folk-tales, some of which have appeared in an English version.

Nicholas Roerich (born in 1874) occupies a unique place in modern Russian painting. Unmistakably Russian, browsing lovingly in native lore and architecture, Roerich is at the same time most international in his appeal and in his aspirations. His paintings have been exhibited throughout the United States, where he has numerous

friends and admirers. In November, 1923, the Roerich Museum was founded in New York, in connection with a school and an international art centre, known as "Corona Mundi." Roerich is a worshipper of beauty as a spiritual factor for ennobling the race and bringing about international understanding and brotherhood. Indeed, his art knows no limitations of time or space, for he envisages the universe in its past, present, and future as a unit, as a continuous song binding the stone age to the age of electricity, vibrating as a connecting cord between the mounds of northern Russia and the coast of Maine, between the pale landscape of Finland and exotic New Mexico, between tapestry-like Italy and the formidable Himalayas. In his quest of beauty, he has traversed the globe, penetrating the forbidding monasteries of the Tibetan Buddhists and the unexplored regions of Mongolia. Roerich's man is not the "king of nature," but merely a particle of it, not any more significant on his canvas than a fiery cloud, or a craggy slope, or a streaming shower of sunshine. This pantheistic attitude fills Roerich with a wondrous inner harmony, and lends his work that unmodern repose and tranquillity which has been unknown since the day of Rublev. He pours his sense of universal harmony into his paintings with such spontaneous ease that the spectator is hardly aware of his technique, of the means which he employs for the achievement of such perfect composition, of such unearthly lights and colors. Roerich's mysticism does not befog his vision of the world as it is. On the contrary, so penetrating is his clairvoyance that on the eve of the war he produced a series of paintings which prophesied the coming catastrophe with an uncanny certitude, as for example, in his *Doomed City, The Last Angel, The Cry of the Serpent, Deeds of Men.*

Russia did not lag behind the West in going through the post-Impressionistic currents, such as Futurism, Cubism, Expressionism, and others, that are so characteristic of the European pre-war mood of decadence, restlessness, oversatiation, and fatigue. As elsewhere, this transitional period had its salutary effect also in Russia, stimulating the quest after novel forms of expression, unbound by subject-matter. Again, in Russia as in other countries, the ultra-

extreme tendencies have worn off their edges and given place to serious artistic efforts. The pre-war currents are perhaps best represented by Kandinsky, who both in his paintings and writings (the English version bears the title: *The Art of Spiritual Harmony)* has championed the view that art and nature must follow different roads, and that painting ought to be as independent of subject-matter as music is. Consequently Kandinsky names his canvases merely, Composition Number So and So, inviting the spectator to regard nothing but the composition and the color and enjoy or condemn them for their harmony or discord, in the same way as one would evaluate a sonata. This principle has been shared by the majority of the new schools, and its application is, naturally, of the most diverse variety, from dazzling and genuinely masterful symphonies of color to anæmic geometric designs of dubious value.

One of the most promising Russian painters of today is Boris Grigoryev. Before the war he had lived and worked in Paris, where he exhibited canvases reminiscent of Toulouse-Lautrec. He subsequently saturated himself with post-Impressionistic tendencies, and returned to Russia, in the figurative and direct sense, coming out of it again with a collection of remarkable drawings and paintings produced after the revolution. Grigoryev's command of the line is hardly rivalled today: with a few strokes he attains significant form, light and shadows, volume and powerful expressiveness. His oil paintings possess a sophisticated simplicity, recalling to one's mind the Primitives and at the same time bearing the marks of the most modernist tendencies. He employs color subtly, yet with abandon, not hesitating to paint a man's face saffron-yellow or warm pink against a sky-blue sheep. The interesting and characteristically Russian thing about Grigoryev's magnificent art is that it is synthetic, which is most easily observed in his portraits. In them one sees how skilfully he combines Cubistic and Futuristic motives and methods with sound Russian Realism, bringing out the intrinsic traits of the sitter, and creating simultaneously a picture of striking form. Young Grigoryev may be regarded as a link between the Novgorod masters and the Neo-Classicists of today.

ART OF ILLUMINATION

PLEASING, artistic books have ever attracted, as those of dull, unattractive appearance have repelled. Children that frown over dreary pages will turn with alacrity to others embellished with pictures. For this reason school texts are made as appealing as possible, the better to arouse an awakening interest. Commonplace subjects are rendered inviting because of the decorations of books or by their abundant illustrations. Older readers as well prefer artistic editions for their own enjoyment and care is constantly to make books decorative and alluring.

Similarly, in early times the desire to please the eye as well as enlighten the mind led to the development of illumination and miniature painting. The word *illuminator* appears to have been first used in the twelfth century and signified one who "lighted up" pages with bright colors and burnished gold. The word miniature has a very different significance today from the one it originally held. Red paint was called *minium,* and he who used it called a miniator. The present application of the name to a small picture is of comparatively recent date and arose through the confusion of the French *mignon* and Latin *minus.*

In appearance books of antiquity were wholly unlike those seen generally today. The Egyptians used papyrus for their writing material; the Greeks also used it, while skins of animals were in time utilized—the supply of papyri reeds being limited. Skins of nearly all animals and fish as well have served at one time or another as writing material, but parchment, made of sheepskin, and vellum, prepared calfskin, were generally preferred. Skins of pigs and oxen were prepared for cheaper surfaces and served as account books, ledgers and the like. Imitations of skins were devised in the Middle Ages and the manufacture of paper considerably reduced the cost of writing material.

Before the invention of printing, books were copied by hand, and, until the Christian era, took the form of scrolls.

Our word volume is derived from the Latin *volumen,* meaning a roll, or, more accurately, *something rolled.* These scrolls were not kept upon open shelves as are books today, but in closets prepared for them. The only existing library which in appearance resembles those which were provided in Roman homes is the Library of the Vatican, where no books are ordinarily visible at all—these being locked in cabinets arranged for them.

After the Christian era square books grew in favor. At first tablets of wood were prepared for accounts. The *codex,* meaning a block of wood, was first merely a square piece of board smoothed that one might write upon it. Soon two of these boards were fastened together by rings and coated with wax to make a yielding surface. After a letter had been read, the recipient could press the wax smooth again with the flat end of his stylus and inscribe upon the fresh surface his reply. These tablets remained in favor for some time. The one who carried these about, in capacity of postman, was known as a *tabellarius.* Finally skins were substituted in place of the rigid boards, and this marks the origin of books in the form known to us today, for several pages might be bound together.

Among the Egyptians the *Book of the Dead* was most highly prized. This was the guide for the soul on its perilous journey to the realm of Osiris, and without its aid one could scarcely hope to arrive safely. It was upon this that the scribe expended greatest care, and illuminated fragments of this book have been recovered. After the decline of illumination in Egypt little is known of it until the time of the Roman principate. However, this does not mean that the art died out. In all probability it flourished, but examples of illumination are lacking for the period intervening between ancient Egyptian and late Roman years. It should always be remembered that the Nile valley has supplied most unusual conditions for the preservation of ancient remains, its arid climate preserving articles sealed in Egyptian tombs in spite of the flight of centuries.

We know little of classical illumination. Illuminated books were current among the Romans of the late republic and principate, and it is evident that they were made in

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imitation of these earlier known in Greece. Fragments of a copy of the Iliad, made probably in the fourth century of our era, are preserved in Milan. These consist of fifty-eight miniatures that have been cut from the copy, the illustrations alone, it would appear, having been valued. Only the lines that chanced to be written upon the backs of these miniatures remain. It is thought that the miniatures were copied from those in an older Greek version. The costumes are partly Greek, partly Roman. The gods are shown with the nimbus—the head of Jove encircled by a purple halo, Venus by a green one, while blue was used for several other deities.

The so-called *Virgil* of the Vatican is ascribed to about the same period. Fifty miniatures are herein set in simple frames of colored bands. The figures are not graceful nor the work artistic. It indicates a decadence of art.

As Rome declined and the new capital of Constantine became the cultural as well as political center, Byzantine art arose. Influences of both East and West were felt in Constantinople and a school of illumination quickly developed, to be recognized for several centuries as the foremost in Europe. Those characteristics which predominated in Byzantine painting are found also in Byzantine illumination: love of splendor, lavish use of gold, silver and bright colors. Manuscripts done in burnished gold on parchment stained in royal purple became the prerogative of the emperors—purple ink being likewise reserved for them. The Gospels were frequently prepared in this costly way, and in such rare examples as survive the gold is still bright, although the purple parchment, being not dyed, but merely stained, has faded.

The work of the miniature painter and the illuminator took definite form, both working under arbitrary rules laid down by the Church. A similarity thus prevails among Byzantine specimens of illumination and makes it difficult to assign a definite date to particular manuscripts. No study of the nude being permitted, the figures show ignorance of anatomy. The draperies are sometimes skillfully done, but more frequently hang on the figures. In time monotony characterized Byzantine illumination, and western

schools became more important. The *Book of Genesis* preserved today in the Imperial Library of Vienna well illustrates the Byzantine type. It consists of twenty-four leaves of purple vellum, miniatures being inscribed on either side of the page.

Charlemagne encouraged education in the West and brought Alcuin from England to teach the school he established in Aachen—now Aix-la-Chapelle. The production of books was at once necessary and the illuminator's art demanded. Thus arose what is known as the Carolingian School of Illumination. In 796, and for several years following, Alcuin was Abbot of the Benedictine Monastery at Tours, where extensive literary work was carried on for the Emperor. Skilled illuminists were required, who in time developed certain peculiarities by which the school is distinguished. A Bible done in the Latin text was known as the Vulgate. There is preserved today in the British Museum a manuscript believed to have been the Vulgate done at Tours for Charlemagne. Bright gold and silver were used and gorgeous colors, yet the whole was neither gaudy nor tasteless. Instead of representing the Evangelists as old men—as had been the custom among Byzantine artists —they are represented as youths, much conventionalized.

The work of the Carolingian School reached its culmination in the ninth century, and centered in various Benedictine monasteries, particularly at Paris, Rheims and Tours.

No school of illumination produced more splendid results than the Celtic in the north of Ireland, whither Christianity was brought even before it was taken to England. The Irish monks were sufficiently remote to allow them to develop uninfluenced in the main by other schools. To be sure, traces of Byzantine influences are to be found, but, generally speaking, they worked independently. The art of the goldsmith had flourished here, and Celtic illumination gives constant evidence of the strong influence metal work exercised upon the illuminators. Durrow was the first center of Christianity as taught by St. Columba; later Iona became the head of the monastic system, and finally Kells, in Meath County. To the monastery of Kells in the seventh century was brought a copy of the Gospels sup-

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posed to have been inscribed by Columba himself. This precious example of Irish illumination, the most beautiful in the world, is now the possession of Trinity College, Dublin. The *Book of Durrow* is next in importance.

The *Book of Kells* contains, in addition to the four Gospels, a portion of the interpretation of Hebrew names —frequently included at the time with the Gospels—a list of the land grants to the Monastery of Kells and the Eusebian Canons. Eusebius, a historian of the latter portion of the third century, prepared ten tablets, or canons, citing first those passages common to all four Gospels, those common to three, to two, and, finally, those peculiar to one.

The Great Gospels of St. Columba, bound in jeweled covers, were many years treasured by the Cathedral at Kells, by whose name the manuscript is now known. Certain characteristics of Celtic illumination are at once apparent as one examines reproductions of its beautiful pages, or, better still, the pages themselves. Floral and folial decorations were not used; rather spirals, bands, snakes, lizards —these last used to symbolize demons—birds, fish, and human figures abound. Such patterns and designs as were usual in metal work, such bands and traceries as were to be seen on cross stones erected to commemorate fallen Irish chieftains,—these are found in this wonderful book. While in classical and Byzantine work it was the title of the book and the opening words that were illuminated, in Celtic manuscripts we find the first page of each Gospel beautified. Gold was not used—perhaps because it was difficult to obtain. Yet its absence is not conspicuous, so splendid are the blended colors and so complex the designs.

"The mind is filled with amazement as one views the extraordinary combinations of extravagant human and reptile forms, intricate arabesque traceries and geometrical designs, all woven together in a maze of almost incredible interlacings, which fascinate and charm the eye. Serpents and other reptile forms, but to what species they belong it would be difficult to conjecture; birds with their necks and legs elongated and interlaced; human figures with arms and legs twisted and knotted in coils, while their bodies are intertwined with those of birds—all yielding to the capricious

requirements of the designer—are made to do duty as parts of this marvelous composition of ornament."[1]

The Anglo-Saxon School grew up under the patronage and supervision of King Alfred. Winchester surpassed all other centers in the tenth century for its effective work. The Benedictional of Aethelwold, Bishop of Winchester, survives. It was done by a monk named Godemann and contains thirty full-page miniatures—scenes for the most part from the life of Christ—each framed in an elaborate border. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries the Winchester monks were famous for the beauty of form and delicate grace of their work.

After the Norman Conquest, strong French influence is apparent. The upper class was composed of Normans, who alone were patrons. Magnificent Psalters survive as specimens of the Anglo-Norman School. Small conventionalized leaves, grotesque dragons and monsters are found in the borders. The finest work was invariably done in the Benedictine monasteries.

In the Middle Ages monasteries were busy places. The scriptorium was the room given over to the making of books. Often the labor was divided, one monk preparing the parchment for use, making it smooth and perfect; another carefully inscribing the text. It frequently happened that several copies would be made simultaneously, one reading while several scribes wrote down the words, leaving spaces for initials and miniatures; another put in the initials and the skillful painter finally placed the miniatures in the portions allotted to them. If the book was to be bound, this was done by still another. Monasteries could not always provide each portion of the labor, in which case arrangements were made for lay workmen to supply the part lacking. In the Benedictine monasteries, where the best work was done, it was customary to transfer monks from one to another of these religious centers. Thus the art of one became the possession of others. When finally illumination became a trade there was an immediate falling off in artistic qualities of the art. Only he who labored for the glory of his religion and his Order was sufficiently painstaking to make the work perfect. Haste and desire to accomplish much in a short time led

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finally to a decadence of illumination when books became more plentiful.

The resourcefulness and inventive skill, the perfection of the work, giving no indication whatever of weariness, astonishes the beholder of priceless manuscripts in European centers. It must be remembered, however, that these pages were done under favorable circumstances. The monastery itself afforded shelter from a tumultuous world; it was generally isolated so that few disturbing echoes of mediæval upheaval reached its confines. The necessities of life were provided for the brothers, who received no pay whatever for what they did, and who found great satisfaction and considerable relief from an otherwise monotonous life in labor of this kind. Moreover, the rules of the monastery were such that they probably never worked more than two hours without cessation. Although it happened frequently that the larger monasteries were able to provide specialists, quite as often all duties were united in one worker. He found a variety of occupations in preparing his gild and pigments, in making his pens and brushes, and sometimes in preparing his parchment.

Gold and silver were used as fluid or leaf. In the first case the pure gold coin was ground to finest powder, moistened with water and mixed with size—the white of egg or gum arabic; this preparation never allowed the high polish given the gold leaf, which was gold beaten thin and placed over a composition made of powdered marble. The fadeless blue ultramarine was made of powdered lapis lazuli, the deep cut particles separated from the rest by frequent washing. White was obtained from finest marble. Both mineral and vegetable colors were used, but those of mineral origin were most successful and enduring.

It is difficult to distinguish between French and English illumination of the later centuries. The grotesque animals and drollies are usually indicative of English origin. During the fifteenth century the study of the Bible by the laity was discouraged and other religious books were substituted. The *Book of Hours* was the prayer-book for the laity as the Breviary was the prayer-book for the priests. Some of the most beautiful copies were produced in France, one of which,

made for the Duke of Anjou, is now preserved in the National Library of Paris. "Every page has a rich and delicate border, covered with the ivy foliage, and enlivened by exquisitely painted birds, such as the goldfinch, the thrush, the linnet, the jay, the quail, the sparrow-hawk and many others; and at the top of the page, at the beginning of each division of the *Horae,* is a miniature of most perfect grace and beauty, the decorative value of which is enhanced by a background, either of gold diaper, or else of delicate scroll-work in light blue painted over a ground of deep ultramarine."[2] This library possesses as well the *Book of Hours* made for the Duke of Berry and sold at his death for two thousand pounds.

"One special beauty of French illumination of this date is due to the exquisite treatment of architectural frames and backgrounds which are used to enshrine the whole picture. The loveliest Gothic forms are introduced, with the most delicate detail of tracery, pinnacles, canopy-work, shafts and arches, all being frequently executed in gold with subtle transparent shading to give an effect of relief. From the technical point of view these manuscripts reach the highest pitch of perfection; the burnished gold is thick and solid in appearance, and is convex in surface so as to catch high lights and look, not like gold leaf, but like actual plates of the purest and most polished gold. The pigments are of the most brilliant colors, so skillfully prepared and applied that they are able to defy the power of time to change their hue or even dim their splendor."[3]

The demand for secular books on the part of nobles enlarged the scope of the illuminator. The *Chansons de Geste* (songs of deeds) and Froissart's *Chronicles* were reproduced again and again. Chivalrous feats and romances caught the ear of knights and brought new commissions to the monasteries. Yet these never supplied such constant demand nor were ever executed with such painstaking as the religious books. The *Horae* were long regarded as suitable to give royalty, church dignitary, noble or bride. Bound in covers of gold, studded with precious jewels and rare stones, such a book might be offered as security for a loan and was treasured as an heirloom. "They were things of beauty and

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joys forever to their possessors. A prayer-book was not only a prayer-book, but a picture-book, a shrine, a little mirror of the world, a sanctuary in a garden of flowers. One can well understand their preciousness apart from their religious use, and many have seen strange eventful histories no doubt."

It is surprising to find that Italy was comparatively poor in the art of illumination. Of the twelfth century there remains little beside the *Exultet,* a roll of pictures presenting scenes from Old and New Testaments, and used to hang in front of the pulpit for the instruction and edification of the masses, who could seldom read or write. Such a roll was called an Exultet from its first word—the opening word of a hymn: "Exultet jam Angelica turba caelorum," sung at the dedication of the wax tapers on Easter eve. The Renaissance brought a fresh impulse in all fields of art; illumination improved and for a time stood unrivaled. Beautiful copies of Dante's *Divine Comedy* and Petrarch's *Poems* were made.

Germany, Flanders, Spain, and the Netherlands all produced schools of illumination. Only the student of this subject would be interested to follow the various distinctions found among them. The great museums afford opportunity to study their characteristics, and a few English works discuss at length certain aspects of the subject. In America it is more difficult to study the subject minutely, owing to the dearth of mediæval manuscripts. The old missions treasure interesting examples of the art as practiced at the time of their foundation—after the invention of printing had lessened the demand for hand labor to a marked extent.

The illuminated Missals shown in our text are taken from originals in possession of the Newberry Library of Chicago and are examples of the work done by French monks in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The history of manuscript work is fascinating and shows a gradual evolution from the time when, in the early centuries, books were entirely free from color, and had no chapters, no sentences, no capitals; then the enlarging of the first letter following a sentence, then the coloring of it,

then the ends and corners of such letters exaggerated, running over into the margin, until the margin finally became filled—then a separation of text and margin, the margin receiving an independent design, sometimes the arms, devices or crest of the person for whom they were made being placed there; then the interior of these larger letters and also the margins, began to be filled with miniature designs, then framed as we see them here, the pictures with the beautiful borders forming the frame.

If we could look back a few centuries and visit one of the famous abbeys or monasteries wherein this work was done we should see a number of monks in their narrow cells, busily engaged in this copying or reproducing of manuscripts, some doing plain lettering, others tracing the delicate, lacelike, almost invisible, lines that are found in some of these works of art; others, again, outlining the flowers, or, possibly, others putting on the gold, and the most skilled of all doing the exquisite miniature work, similar to these here reproduced, which formed the highest type of artistic excellence. Let us pause and see how they do it. First, we observe that each of their cells has a small window opening to the outer world, near which the artist or scribe sits; next, we notice that each cell is without doors and opens onto the aisle of the cloister, just like so many stalls. At intervals a silent monk walks through the corridor and scans the occupant of each narrow cell—no idling here. Perfect silence reigns, for no talking is permitted, signs being used should it be necessary for the attendant (called the Armarius) to bring more copy or material or tools. As the hours of prayer arrive the work is stopped and each monk takes part in each of the seven hours appointed for worship; as the shades of evening fall all work is laid aside, for no painting could be done by artificial light; it might injure the manuscript. Little mattered it to the monk whether the manuscript on which he was engaged was finished in one year or twenty; no dream of avarice stimulated his efforts. He worked solely for his art, for the glory of God, and for the honor of his monastery. An instance of the infinite amount of labor required for these illuminated manuscripts is shown in one called *The Book of Kells.* Here, in the

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space of a quarter of an inch, were counted, by the aid of a microscope, one hundred and fifty-eight interlacements of a slender ribbon border formed of white lines edged with black ones upon a dark ground, without detecting a false line or an irregular interlacement; and when we consider that there could be no erasures or alterations it is all the more remarkable. To get back to our monks again: We note one is engaged in beating out the gold he is going to use; another is mixing his colors, for no dealer in commercial colors could mix the pigments that gave the beauty and durability found in these examples of their work. Think of the blues used six hundred years ago in these manuscripts, still retaining the same hue as when it was put on, so long ago, by one of these monks. No such blues are made today. The secret of the fadeless blue is a lost art, forgotten and passed away with the passing of the cloistered artist monk. Our monk has beaten his gold; now let us see how he puts it on. First, we note that the illumination is apparently completed; all the colors, with their variety of shades and blendings are complete, and it looks a work of art already; but there still remain many hours of labor, possibly many weeks, for some of these pages have as many as a hundred different spots of gold, which have been put on in the following manner: first, a light pink clay brought from the East was put over the design made for the gold; this, when dry, was sized; then the gold leaf applied; and finally each of those tiny specks of gold was burnished by hand with an agate. This process accounts for the raised appearance of the gold on the manuscripts, giving it the semblance of solid gold; in fact, some of the most elaborate Missals have had their large capitals removed. Where the gold covered a large surface the thief evidently thought it to be solid gold. While on the subject of gold it might be fitting to observe that gold was not used in the English manuscript until the tenth century; from the tenth to the twelfth powdered gold was used, which gives the gold in the manuscript of that period a ruddy glow; after the twelfth the gold leaf beaten by the monks themselves was used.

We have seen these monks all busily engaged in the producing of these illuminated pages. Now let us see what

they were making. At first the principal work at the monasteries was the making of the "prayer" book or, as it was called, *The Book of Hours,* containing the calendar and services of the church. Some of these *Books of Hours* contained several hundred pages similar to those we reproduce. The one from which the *Adoration of the Magi* and *The Coronation of the Virgin* were secured contained three hundred and six pages. Other subjects of a secular nature were also made, but the *Book of Hours* was in greatest demand.

But why did the monks give so much attention to the illustrations of a prayer book? We must remember that at this period there were no books other than these manuscripts, and few knew how to read, hence these illuminated Missals served to teach by pictures. For instance, first in the book came the Calendar Months. Even if the owner could not read and for the month of May he beheld a scene —a May Festival—and for other months similar emblems, he knew what each was. Next in the book came four leaves representing the Evangelists, then followed the hours proper, with their appointed lesson for each hour. "The Adoration of the Magi" was for the "Sext" hour; "Flight into Egypt," for "Vespers"; "Coronation" for "Compline"; and after this followed psalms and prayers, etc., etc.

Lastly we may consider for whom they were made: Sometimes to be presented to some ecclesiastical dignitary; sometimes to appease some great noble or to reward some great potentate; sometimes a wedding gift to royalty, and no gift was more highly prized during the fourteenth century than were these illuminated masterpieces, which in many cases were bound in covers of gold set with jewels and precious stones; the usurer (pawnbroker) of that day would lend large amounts of money at any time with an illuminated Missal as security.

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[1] Robinson: *Celtic Illumination.*
[2] Middleton: *Illuminated Manuscripts.*
[3] Ibid.

GREAT PERIODS OF PAINTING ILLUSTRATED

Art Beyond the Alps

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ADORATION OF THE LAMB—GHENT ALTARPIECE.—HUBERT AND JAN VAN EYCK

JUDGES KNIGHTS HERMITS PILGRIMS

DETAIL OF GHENT ALTARPIECE

ADORATION OF THE LAMB—DETAIL OF GHENT ALTARPIECE

Adoration of the Lamb

"*THE Adoration of the Lamb,* with its nineteen large panels—large, that is to say, in comparison with most of the other panel-pictures by the brothers—must have taken many years to paint. . . . Upon the principal panel below is the *Adoration of the Lamb;* on the lower panels of the wings on either side of it are the Just Judges and the Knights, the Pilgrims and the Hermits advancing to adore. . . .

Among the knights are St. Michael and St. George, St. Maurice and Charlemagne. Knights and judges together represent the two sides of the active life. The hermits and pilgrims, devoted to a life of contemplation, are opposed to them on the other wing. All four parties move along tortuous ways through a beautiful country toward the mystic altar of the Lamb. The nearer they approach, the more richly is the country wooded, and the clearer and purer is the overarching sky. About the altar itself on every side flowers burst into joyful bloom—violets and pansies, cowslips, daisies and lilies of the valley, all in their fairest colours. Behind are purple flags, lilies, roses and vines in fullest strength of life and glow of blossom; no stricken bud, no blighted leaf, no withered flower among them, for they grow in the soil of Paradise, where there is no decay. Even the stones in the brook are jewels, and the water of life washes them.

Those who have already arrived are grouped in adoration on either side of the altar. Ranged in front are the Apostles, fourteen in number, including Paul and Barnabas; behind are Popes, Bishops, and a body of the faithful. . . . Angels with gorgeous rainbow-coloured wings kneel round the altar, some in contemplation holding the instruments of the Passion, some in adoration gazing on the emblem of Divine Love, some swinging their censers, the symbols of prayer, till they touch the words embroidered in letters of gold, 'Jesus the Way, the Truth and the Life.' As the keynote to the whole composition the painter has written, along the front of the altar, this text from his Latin Testament: 'Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.'

Evidently we are confronted in these panels with an elaborated 'Paradise picture' such as the Cologne artists had been the first to paint under the influence of the Mystics."

—Conway: *The Van Eycks.*

PORTRAITS OF JEAN ARNOLFINI AND HIS WIFE.—JAN VAN EYCK

Portraits of Jean Arnolfini and His Wife

"WITH what wonderful ingenuity the whole picture has been created! We accept it without hesitation as true to life. And then, if we begin to scrutinize, the 'art' of the painter will reveal itself. The green robe trimmed with fur and contrasting with the red chair, gives immediate pleasure; even more cunningly devised are those points of colour to the left, the three oranges on the table, and the apple on the window sill. Notice especially the manipulation of the light; how from that one side window it falls upon both faces, and lights up every bright object in the room; the oranges, the brass chandelier, the glittering thread inwoven with the embroidery on the belt and sleeves of the lady. Observe the purpose served by that concave mirror which catches the light from an open door somewhere outside the picture. . . . The lighter pair of clogs to the left and the curly-haired dog also play their part in the scheme. . . .

The more the picture is studied the more conscious do we become of the premeditated care with which every smallest detail has been brought into subordination to the general effect. Here is a master-hand guided by a master-brain."

—Innes: *Schools of Painting.*

"As for Arnolfini—the Lord deliver us from being caught as debtors to the like of him! A sharp man of business if ever there was one, mean, sly and self-satisfied."

—Conway: *The Van Eycks.*

"Here are problems solved at the start that Italy of the Renaissance never solved. The figures stand in the room, held in the atmosphere of that room lit by the window at the side, every object in that room painted to its exact and true value, the haunting shadows yielding their half-revealed facts with amazing truth. In the mirror are seen the backs of the standing figures and two figures appear from outside the picture, supposed to be Jan van Eyck and his assistant. So broadly is the whole rendered, yet so minute the detail, that the small mirror contains in its frame ten small pictures of *Scenes from the Passion.*"

—Macfall: *History of Painting.*

MADONNA WITH THE CHANCELLOR ROLLIN.—JAN VAN EYCK

ST. LUKE PAINTING THE VIRGIN.—VAN DER WEYDEN

St. Luke Painting the Virgin

"FOR the altar of the guild of St. Luke at Brussels Van der Weyden painted the well-known *St. Luke painting the Virgin,* now at Munich, wrought with great beauty and translucency of colour, and with the added interest of holding the painter's self-portrait as St. Luke."

—Macfall.

Madonna with the Chancellor Rollin

"THE very precious *Madonna with the Chancellor Rollin,* by Van Eyck, one of the masterpieces of the Louvre, is a splendid illustration of marvellous attention to detail. The picture will bear scrutinizing with a magnifying glass. Observe the delicate rendering of the Chancellor's brocaded gown, the gold embroidery on Mary's robe, containing spiritual words, the jewels in the crown above her head and in the cross held by the Infant Christ, the figures in the frieze, the panes of glass—both white and stained—above all, the minute depicting of the landscape, where, in the immediate foreground, are birds, growing flowers, and two men against a crenellated battlement, and in the distance a river spanned by a bridge, over which twenty-one people pass on horseback and on foot. In the water is the reflection of the bridge and of a tower. On either bank rise mediæval buildings of a city, in whose quaint streets people are hurrying; some pass up the steps of a cathedral to the right. Yet this incredible minuteness does not detract from the effect of the picture, as a whole, which keeps an organic unity due to the simplicity of the composition, to the admirably applied principles of chiaroscuro, and to the adequate subordination of parts, of which Van Eyck was a thorough master. The glowing, rich color, of almost scintillating brilliancy, is perfectly harmonious.

"No other artist was ever capable of so thoroughly combining truthfulness of detail with impressive and harmonious grandeur, and only Flemish artists were able to paint a face with miniature-like exactness and at the same time hold to the fundamental characteristics of the man and sustain the values.

"Van Eyck's Madonna is essentially the type of the Flemish Virgin. She never wears the gauzy veil which outlines the sensitive, girlish face of the Florentine Madonna, nor the heavy white scarf that encircles the matronly face of a Venetian. On the contrary her face, plain and earnest, with long upper eyelids and high forehead, is relieved only by locks of wavy hair falling over her shoulders."

—Florence Heywood: *Pictures of Louvre.*

THE SHRINE OF ST. URSULA.—MEMLING

The Shrine of St. Ursula

A RELIQUARY, believed to contain some of the saint's bones, was constructed in the form of a Gothic church. Memling's series of paintings decorated the sides and ends of the shrine.

"The shrine has long ago taken an accepted place among the most generally admired works of fifteenth century painting, so that I need waste no words in praising it. The artist treats the incidents of the legend as a fairy-tale, which must always be told as though there could be no possible doubt of the truth of every word. The eleven thousand virgins of English noble birth, all bareheaded and clothed in the rich costumes of the fifteenth century Burgundian court, go sailing up the Rhine, tightly packed together in little boats. There is something of Flemish literalness in it all, and yet it is a literalness of a fanciful kind. Each scene looks like a picnic. There is the real Cologne in the background, the ship (a real ship) at the quay, and twelve young ladies landing on the shore. But for the presence of an angel in the background we should not have supposed that anything miraculous was intended. It is in the sudden changes, the surprising succession of events that the fairy element comes in . . . and the charm of the tale lies in the surprise. In one panel you see the

(*Continued next page*)

SIDE OF THE SHRINE OF ST. URSULA.—MEMLING

The Shrine of St. Ursula

(Continued)

pretty company landing at Basle, and without a moment's pause starting off one after another along the road to Rome, each so wrapped up in her own thoughts that no two walk together side by side. . . . Then comes the magic transformation. In the next panel the four or five hundred miles of journey, with its Alpine fastnesses, its forests, and its dangers of every kind, have been safely accomplished without fatigue, and we find ourselves in Rome, watching the arrival of the untravel-stained company. Along the level country road, in through the gate, and up the street of the city they come to the portal of a church where Pope and Cardinals are assembled to receive them, while at the same moment Prince Conon, Ursula's betrothed, likewise arrives with his knights, and all joyfully receive baptism at the hands of the priests. We do not see them again until the time of their departure from Basle in company with Pope, bishops and cardinals on their return journey. The picture is of exceeding beauty—the little ship packed with such well-dressed and gently demeanoured personages, the Pope seated in the midst, radiant of countenance and pouring forth words of holy wisdom, to which the devout company pay reverent and delighted attention. The remaining two panels contain the martyrdom."

—Conway: *The van Eycks and their Followers.*

THE BANKER AND HIS WIFE.—MATSYS

The Banker and His Wife

"THE *Banker and His Wife,* original in subject, size, composition, and technique, is a fine production. The accuracy with which the details are finished is still eminently Flemish. Note the objects on the shelves, the rings on the roll, the pearls, the illuminated book, and the tiny mirror reflecting a man reading by a window and a landscape outside. Yet the picture is so ably treated in broad masses of color—the ochre of the smooth wall behind, the clear green of the table-cover—and the figures are so beautifully rounded by subtle gradations of light and tone, without marked shadows, that the general impression is one of largeness and simplicity. The characterization of the faces is singularly fine, and the delineation of the hands emphasizes the nature of the personages—the shrewd, calculating, and conservative banker, and the sympathetic, docile, and pious wife."

—Florence Heywood: *Pictures of the Louvre.*

WINTER LANDSCAPE.—BRUEGHEL THE ELDER

Winter Landscape

BRUEGHEL was the first Flemish painter to sketch landscapes for themselves alone. To be sure, he still used them as settings for figures but the importance he placed upon the natural scene is to be considered in the development of the pure landscape. Again, he was among the earliest to depict peasant life.

"He was born in a Flemish village, and his parents were humble village-folk. Thus he knew peasant ways from childhood: he had watched them walking in their fields, dancing at their feasts. He knew how the seasons passed in quiet country places, and, above all, he had been inspired by the surpassing beauty of the country in winter, when the snow lies in unbroken whiteness over the meadow-lands, and the delicate tracery of the bared trees is black against the cold grey of the skies.

"Our illustration shows one of these scenes, and is the most perfect example of his work. The picture is now in Vienna, and nowhere is the poetry of the snow-clad world more exquisitely shown. On the frozen ponds the skaters exercise their skill; in front of the inn-door the hunters start for the chase, followed by their eager snuffling dogs; the brambles in the foreground lift long tendrils with their few withered leaves; the hungry birds chatter in the trees; behind are the distant hills with their snowy tops."

—Mrs. Head: *How to Enjoy Pictures.*

HELEN FOURMENT RUBENS AND HER SON.—RUBENS

Helen Fourment Rubens and Her Son

LOOKING at this picture of the beautiful Helena and her cherubic son, one is not surprised that Rubens should have been attracted to her. For she is just such a "buxom, blithe and debonair" type as he loved to depict. If he had not made his reputation as a painter before he married her, one would conclude that she had been the model of his full-blown, almost coarse goddesses, nymphs, and the like. Still one feels that Rubens' women are exuberant rather than voluptuous. They lack something of the Pagan quality evident in such Italians as Giorgione.

RUBENS AND ISABELLA BRANDT.—RUBENS

Rubens and Isabella Brandt

THIS painting is now in Munich. It was done by the artist shortly after his first marriage. It was of Isabella Brandt, his first wife, that Rubens said he found "an excellent companion whom one could or rather must love, for she had none of the faults characteristic of her sex."

"The charming face of Isabella glows with happy content, and in her eyes, with their slightly mischievous expression, there shines a certain pride in having gained the heart of the great artist who had chosen to associate her with his life. As for Rubens, his face is full of serenity and full of confidence in the future, he abandons himself to the sweetness of being loved."

—Emile Michel.

PERSEUS AND ANDROMEDA.—RUBENS

CHILDREN OF CHARLES I.—VAN DYCK

Perseus and Andromeda

MYTHOLOGICAL subjects were chosen by Rubens largely because they gave opportunity for the portrayal of the nude, in which he excelled. Of his chubby amours, cherubs and children, his biographer says:

"He loved to ornament his compositions with dimpled little bodies, and his rapid manner of painting rendered perfectly their artless, unskilled sprightliness and the pretty movements of their plump little limbs, and his delicate, clear colour expressed easily the soft freshness of young flesh modelled by light shadows. He loved to toss a naked baby into a ray of light. His amours and chubby angels tumble about like little animals, abandoned to the joy of frolicking."

—Louis Hourticq: *Rubens.*

Children of Charles I.

VAN DYCK excelled in painting children, in spite of the fact that he generally made them look older than they were. Here for example Charles, the eldest, looks more than five, and his sister more than three. One would almost credit the baby, who grew up to be James II, with having lived as long as that. The painter excelled in reproducing the pearly look of children's skin. Another painting of these same three children is differently posed, with "Baby Stuart," perhaps the most admired baby ever painted, if we may judge by the number of his pictures to be seen throughout the country, at the right instead of in the middle.

It will be noted that the little princess has the "Van Dyck" hand. It has been pointed out that he attached those long delicately pointed fingers and graceful wrists to all sorts of different bodies. He painted that hand upon himself, upon Archbishop Laud, Queen Henrietta, and the whole tribe of young noblemen and noblewomen who sat to him, until, as one critic remarks, the endless repetition becomes ridiculous.

PORTRAIT OF CHARLES I.—VAN DYCK

Portrait of Charles I

"ONE of Van Dyck's greatest achievements is the renowned full length Portrait of Charles I, a production which not only has the smooth technique, elegance, dignity and superb poise found in all of the artist's best work, but which is masterly in composition, with a fine treatment of light and an acute pyschological insight—qualities in which Van Dyck often failed to excel. The portrait of Charles rises nearly to the level of Velasquez and Titian. Charles, his face framed by an effective black hat, his figure outlined by an expanse of sky, stands in an attitude of easy grace with the superb insolence of conscious royalty, of his own divine right as King. The arching tree, the curving neck of the restless horse, the inclined figure of the equerry, the humility of the small page, the rounding line of embankment, all accentuate the haughty attitude of the central figure, the one perpendicular line in the picture. The coloring, rich and harmonious in tone, is admirably managed. Note how the high light on the lustrous satin of the King's arm carries the eye skillfully to the face above. There is a fine subordination of the unimportant, the two attendants being thrown into the shadow."

Heywood: *Pictures of the Louvre.*

FRANS HALS AND WIFE.—FRANS HALS

Frans Hals and His Wife

HERE the artist has painted himself and his second wife, Lysbeth, who seems to have been blessed with enough good nature to get along with her gifted husband's convivial habits and bohemian ways.

"A comely, good-humoured pair decked out in holiday attire, Frans in lace collar and cuffs and broad-brimmed hat and Lysbeth in her best ruff and cap, her hand resting comfortably on his shoulder. With all the cares of mothering a large family—ten children including Anneke's Herman—Lysbeth seems to have retained her health and good spirits well into old age."

—Gerwig: *Fifty Famous Painters.*

PORTRAIT OF HENRICKJE STOFFELS.—REMBRANDT

THE LAUGHING CAVALIER.—FRANS HALS

The Laughing Cavalier

THIS is often considered the artist's masterpiece. It is one of the priceless treasures of the Wallace Collection, London. It is easy to read the character of the swaggering cavalier, confident of his physical strength and proud of his rich attire.

"The use of the characteristic Hals technique of brush-work in the face here yields a form less obvious in means of execution, and so more convincing than is usual with him. It is perhaps also the best realization of the almost photographic rendering of stuffs, varied in color, pattern, and intricate design. There is more reality in these stuffs than in other of the other Dutchmen. . . . This is a wonderful achievement in technique, shows Hal's mastery of stuff-painting as better than that of any of the other Dutch artists, and proves that he was a supreme master of the use of paint. . . . Nevertheless, in this as in all his work, there is a certain obvious virtuosity."

—Barnes: *The Art in Painting.*

Portrait of Hendrickje Stoffels

"NO one save a master of masters could ever have painted this portrait. This likeness of the faithful maiden servitor of the difficult latter years of his life is justly regarded as not only one of the greatest treasures of the Louvre but as one of the greatest pictures of the world. Rembrandt himself did not often surpass it.

Dressed in the richest fur-bordered cloak that falls away from her throat and shows the transparent muslin chemisette gathered over her breast, with her soft curly hair falling in ringlets over her ears, with a green velvet cap, big pearl earrings and a pearl brooch at her bodice and bracelet on her left arm, Hendrickje is as charmingly gowned as she is lovable in expression. Big dark eyes looking out tenderly and brightly, mobile lips, and delicate chin, the whole air of this maid is that of trusting sweetness, joined to a gentle repose that only emphasizes the general intelligence of the countenance. She is sitting nearly full face and the light strikes her clear and brilliantly, the softness of the shadow under her chin growing darker till it is lost in the rich deep tone of the cloak that melts into the darker background. . . .

On every inch of this canvas is felt a penetrating insight, a submerging of technique, an absorption in pure soul-rendering such as even Rembrandt's greatest works do not always show.

—Potter: *Art of the Louvre.*

SYNDICS OF THE CLOTH HALL.—REMBRANDT

Syndics of the Cloth Hall

"THE faces, extremely life-like, are animated by fine, brilliant, yet dark eyes, which do not exactly look at the spectator, but yet they follow you, question you. They are individual, and alike. They are undoubtedly bourgeois merchants, but they are notables at home round a red-covered table; their open ledgers occupy them, and we surprise them in full council. They are busy without action; they speak without moving their lips. Not one of them is posing; they are living. A warm atmosphere whose value is increased tenfold envelops all in rich and grave half-tints. The linen, the faces, the hands stand out in an extraordinary manner and the extreme vividness of the light is as delicately observed as if nature itself had given its quality and measure."

—Fromentin: *Masters of Past Time.*

COURTYARD OF DUTCH HOUSE.—HOOCH

Courtyard of Dutch House

"WHAT ideal beauty was to the Italian painter, the worship of the real was to the Dutchman, and among their artists there was none more sensitive to the beauty of the everyday life around him than Pieter de Hooch, that 'painter of sunshine,' as he has been called. . . . Through his pictures the daily life of his time comes vividly before our eyes. . . .

He had, to an astonishing degree, the sense of perspective, and seldom content with showing us the three walls of a room, he adds open doors and vistas of rooms beyond with passages down which his figures advance or retreat, on their way to or from the courtyard or the road beyond. . . .

The secret of de Hooch's charm is that he can show us the hidden beauty of common things and interpret the mystery of those quiet housewives with their expression of soft harshness and their constant dignity of attitude."

—Head: *How to Enjoy Pictures.*

THE SPINNER.—MAES

The Spinner

THIS picture shows how much Maes had learned of Rembrandt, without becoming an imitator of his great teacher. In coloring, lighting and in characterization this work is reckoned a masterpiece.

"Maes had the advantage of entering Rembrandt's studio when the master had outgrown his early preoccupation with strong chiaroscuro. He therefore assimilated at once the principles of breadth and fusion. Of all Rembrandt's followers, Maes most closely approaches him in spirit. At the time when Maes went to Rembrandt, about 1646, the latter was at the threshold of his spiritual maturity, and in the mood which produced some of his most profound religious pictures. The gravity of his work is reflected to a slight extent in Maes' series of lonely old women reading or spinning or saying grace in dingy rooms. In these the mood of the subject is picturesquely enhanced by the effect of light and shade."

—Baker: *Dutch Painting of the Seventeenth Century.*

THE YOUNG BULL.—POTTER

The Young Bull

"THE picture represents an enormous black and white bull standing on a hillock beneath two trees. Beneath the trees lie a cow, a sheep and a lamb, and behind the trunks stand a ram and a shepherd. An immense meadow, on which cattle are grazing, stretches away to the dim horizon, where the buildings of a town are barely visible. In the broad expanse of sky a bird soars with outspread wings. The bull is proud and defiant, with silky hide and loose dewlap, and stands with firmly planted feet. His eye is savage.

This picture has been the subject of much criticism: the figures of the man, the sheep, and the lamb have been condemned by most critics, while the ram's horns have been called 'a splendid piece of sculpture' and the head of the cow 'the gem of the whole work.' The face of the cow is marvellous. The eyes and the wet and dripping nose and mouth, rivet the spectator's gaze. He fancies he smells the grass-laden breath of the animal and sees her jaw begin to move as she chews the cud.

The Bull was painted in 1647, when Paul Potter was but twenty-two years of age, and was living in Amsterdam and Haarlem. The picture was purchased in 1749 for 630 florins, and in 1795 was carried by the French to Paris and placed in the Louvre, where it was ranked as the fourth most valuable painting. The Dutch government offered 60,000 florins to Napoleon for its restoration."

—Singleton: *Galleries of Holland.*

THE EDGE OF THE FOREST.—RUYSDAEL

The Edge of the Forest

"FEW men have shown a more thorough knowledge of trees, their character of bulk and build, their branches, growth, and manner of leafage, while the same constructive sense appears in his delineation of ground, rocks, water, and in that final test of great landscape-painting, the comprehension and rendering of skies."

—Caffin: *Story of Dutch Painting.*

"Of all Dutch painters, Ruysdael is the one who most nobly resembles his country. He has its breadth, its sadness, its rather dreary placidity, and its monotonous and tranquil charm."

—Fromentin.

"Ruysdael was not only the most famous of Dutch landscape painters, but it may be said of him that he was the greatest landscape painter that modern art has produced. No painter has ever been able to express with greater power the poetry of Northern lands. A draughtsman of the first order, he was also a most finished harmonist. His color, warm and soft, exhibits in its half-tints of light and shade variations of exquisite sweetness. Never did an artist succeed as did Ruysdael in concentrating in his skies filled with sombre and threatening clouds so melancholy and tender a poetical feeling. Never had the simple and rustic material of his native country found an interpreter at once so skilful and so decided."

—Harvard.

THE AVENUE, MIDDLEHARNAIS.—HOBBEMA

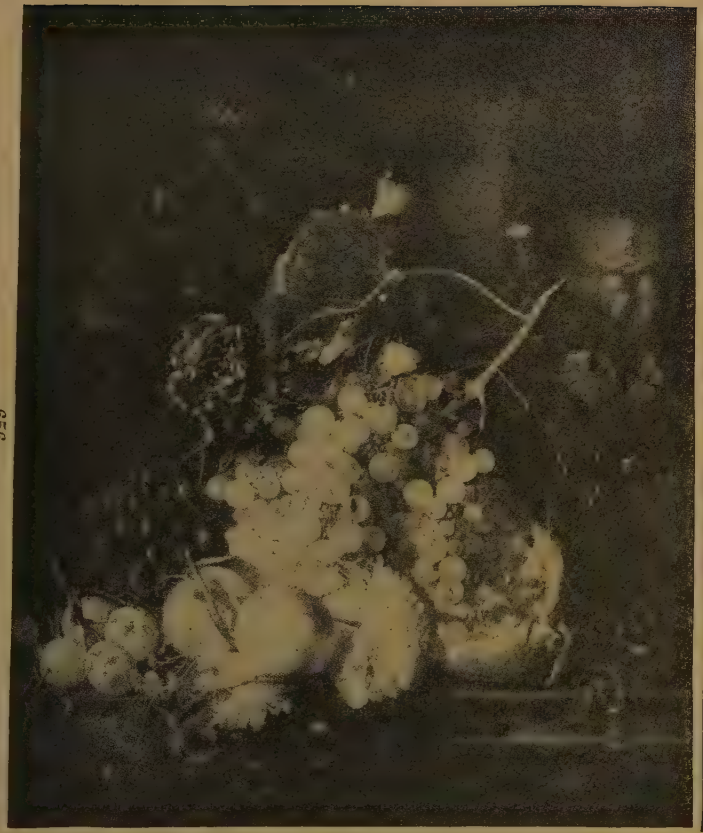
The Avenue, Middleharnais

THIS picture has been called "the most popular landscape that has ever been painted and certainly in design one of the most perfect. It appeals to everybody. Countless reproductions have been sold. He [Hobbema] lives by this picture and also in another beautiful way. John Crome adored him, and his last words, a century and a quarter later, were, 'Hobbema, Hobbema, how I have loved you!' "

—Hind: *Landscape Painting.*

"Most towns and villages in Holland are approached by just such avenues, which, when the trees are not lopped, as in the picture, afford pleasant shade to those who walk out into the country in summertime. Here the long straight road is enclosed by tall, formal beech-trees, and on either side of the road are ditches, into which the water drains for the use of the market-gardens beyond; a gardener is at work in one of the prim gardens with its grafted bush-stems. In the distance is the little town of Middleharnais, with its red roofs and its church-tower and quaint belfry. The avenue widens out to the foreground: the whole picture is composed in an original and charming way, and is yet so true to nature that you are reminded of it a hundred times as you walk about the roads and fields of Holland."

—Head: *How to Enjoy Pictures.*



FRUIT AND FLOWERS.—VAN HUYSUM

MADONNA OF THE ROSE ARBOR.—STEPHAN LOCHNER

Madonna of the Rose Arbor

"IN a bower of climbing vines and blossoming roses and lilies, the crowned Virgin, dreamy and remote, is seated on a veritable carpet of flowers, holding the Babe on her knee. About the happy pair, in semicircle, crowd tiny angels with outspread wings, adoring, bringing gifts and making music on the organ, psalter harp and viol. In the upper air two of them hold back a gold-brocaded curtain to reveal God the Father, the Dove, and a heaven full of cherubs. The Virgin is robed entirely in blue, dark, intense yet softly luminous; the angels, in pink, red and yellow, are like flowers about her. It is a very small picture, like just a line of perfect poetry, a strain of exquisite melody. The stillness of some of these Madonna pictures might be too unearthly, their holiness too oppressive, were it not relieved by the quick movements of the angels bearing their tribute."

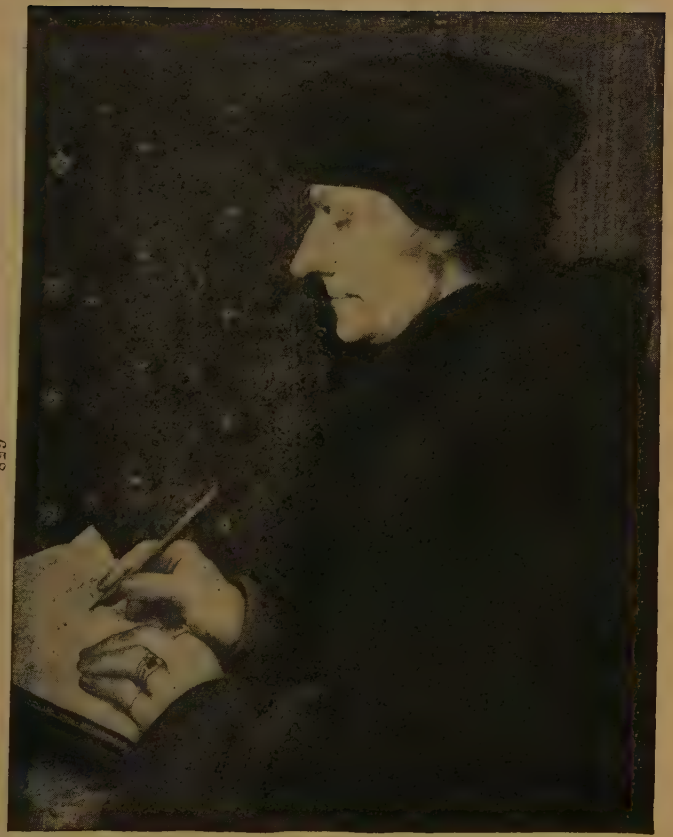
—Dickinson: *Masters of German Art.*

Fruit and Flowers

"THE class of paintings which are known by the designation of still life is one of the most interesting; not indeed from a moral point of view, for the reproduction of fruits, flowers, glass and plate, however cleverly executed, does not appeal to us except from the point of view of composition and technical skill. Huysman's execution is elegant, and his works show that he is a naturalist of the first order, and he bestows extraordinary care in the modelling of his fruits.

"There is one curious fact with reference to this painter; that although as a painter of fruits and flowers he gained enormous success, his inclinations were always for landscapes. Whenever he had a few days to himself he fled to the country and amused himself by painting bushes with rude figures. These curious works, which are very interesting, are highly esteemed at the present day."

—Harvard.



PORTRAIT OF ERASMUS.—HOLBEIN

PORTRAIT OF GEORGE GISZE.—HOLBEIN

Portrait of Georg Gisze

"IN the portrait of the Merchant Georg Gisze, every accessory is perfect with a fine perfection: the carnations in the glass vase by his side—the ball of gold, chased with blue enamel, suspended on the wall—the books—the steel-yard—the papers on the table, the seal-ring, with its quartered bearings—all intensely there, and there in beauty of which no one could have dreamed that even flowers or gold were capable, far less parchment or steel. But every change of shade is felt, every rich and rubied line of petal followed; every subdued gleam in the soft blue of the enamel and bending of the gold touched with a hand whose patience of regard creates rather than paints. The jewel itself was not so precious as the rays of enduring light which form it, beneath that errorless hand. He sits alone in his accustomed room, his common work laid out before him; he is conscious of no presence, assumes no dignity, bears no sudden or superficial look of care or interest, lives only as he lived—but forever.

"It is inexhaustible. Every detail of it wins, rewards, the attention with a continually-increasing sense of wonderfulness. It is also wholly true. So far as it reaches, it contains the absolute facts of color, form and character, rendered with an unaccusable faithfulness."

—Ruskin.

Portrait of Erasmus

"IN a letter to his friend, Wilibald Pirkheimer, dated June 3, 1524, Erasmus says: 'Only recently I have again sent two pictures of me to England, painted by a not unskilful artist. He has also taken a portrait of me to France.'

The scholar is wearing his invariable dress of black lined with sable, and over it a dark cloak trimmed with black fur, and a doctor's cap on his gray hair. In his right hand is a reed pen. The scholar is setting down the title of the work upon which he was engaged at the time he was sitting to Holbein.

The portrait is painted with the utmost perfection in dark yet warm tones. The features are firmly set; the sitter's thoughts are entirely concentrated on his work, so that he is oblivious of all else but the matter in hand. The drawing of the hands is masterly. The complexion is warm and healthy, and the eyebrows, unlike the hair, locks of which straggle below the cap, have not turned gray."

—Chamberlain: *Holbein the Younger.*

SELF PORTRAIT.—DÜRER

Self Portrait

"THIS is truly the portrait of a great man; the noble face, fine forehead, and thoughtful eyes, framed by the long, carefully curled locks, compel attention. The combined sweetness and melancholy of expression, the power in the wide-opened eyes, proclaim the student and the man of genius. The fascination of this noble head, that we know Dürer used as the model for his Christ-heads, which have since passed into the recognized type of the head of the Redeemer of the Renaissance painters, must have magnetized many who have stood in front of this beautiful painting. The quaint position of the hand intensifies the devotional character of the picture, which, especially at the first glance, is so strongly marked. After seeing this portrait of the master of northern art it seems easier to understand the fine artist-soul that has poured out its rich imagination through his marvellous series of drawings, engravings and paintings."

—Allen: *Dürer.*

THE FEAST OF THE ROSE CHAPLETS.—DÜRER

The Feast of the Rose Chaplets

"THE Virgin with the Holy Child on her knees sits enthroned in the midst of a smiling landscape, surrounded by kneeling worshippers. Cherubs hold a magnificent crown above her head. The Virgin crowns the kneeling figure of Kaiser Maximilian; the Holy Child places a chaplet on the head of the kneeling Pope, Julius II St. Dominic, the founder of the Fete of the Rosary, and numerous little angels place rose chaplets on the heads of the kneeling groups behind the chief figures. Kaiser Maximilian and Pope Julius are portraits; the kneeling figures on either side are no doubt portraits of the merchants; the figure holding a square is probably the architect Hieronymus. In the middle distance, under a tree, we see Dürer and his friend Pirkheimer. Dürer holds a scroll bearing an inscription, with monogram below."

—Allen: *Dürer.*

THE KNIGHT, DEATH AND THE DEVIL.—DÜRER

The Knight, Death and the Devil

"IN the engraving of *The Knight, Death and the Devil* the principal figure is a knight in full armour with lance in hand, and vizor raised, who rides, mounted on a powerful steed, into a gloomy gorge, whose steep banks and rugged tree-trunks will soon hide from his view the little town on a hill, silhouetted against the clear evening sky. A grim figure of Death holding up his hour-glass mounted on a miserable pony shambles along beside him; a quaint, horned devil stalks behind him, a skull lies in his path. His gallant steed, with headband adorned with a sprig of oak, paces steadily onward, his hound follows closely at his heels. The knight is undismayed at the grisly terrors that beset his path; calm and courageous, he resolutely follows his own set course, ready to complete the work before him even if it shall require him to be faithful unto death."

—Allen: *Dürer.*

PORTRAIT OF FRANCIS I.—CLOUET

Portrait of Francis I

THIS is one of the few portraits that are attributed with reasonable certainty to Jean Clouet. It represents the French king as a young man. Flemish characteristics of early painting are admirably shown. Note, for example, the elaborateness of detail, the delicacy of treatment and stiffness so usual at this time. It must be remembered that early Flemish painters were still under the spell of the miniaturists.

These characteristics of the portrait as a work of art are particularly interesting because Francis I did more than anyone else to "Italianize" French art. Says the French writer Haraucourt: "It may be considered that the Italian Renaissance which was brought to France by the wars of Charles VIII, Louis XII, and Francis I, and established by the Medicis was in reality less profitable than injurious to French genius since it replaced the development of national art by foreign influences. . . . The French were so deeply impressed by the recovered masterpieces of antique art as to adopt them, and by these imitations, individuality was ruined."

It will be remembered that Francis I, needing money, married his son to Catherine de Medici. This portrait was painted about the time the king met Henry VIII and Charles V on the Field of the Cloth of Gold. It makes one even less surprised that this gorgeous gesture of friendship was only a gesture. However, if Francis looks more shrewd than trustworthy, Holbein's portrait of Henry VIII and Spanish paintings of Charles V indicate that he had need of all his wits, and that he was at least as pleasant a customer as his fellow-sovereigns.

SHEPHERDS OF ARCADIA.—POUSSIN

Shepherds of Arcadia

IN this picture "the figure group is brought as far as possible into one plane in the foreground and is set against a landscape distance. . . . Poussin has reconstructed an antique vision, but he escapes making it either pedantic or theatrical. In it he gives the essence of Greek idealism as it appeals to his imagination. In this case the background is wholly subordinated and allowed to fade away at the sides where it is not needed as a setting for the main group. No illusion of distance is attempted."

—Abbott: *Great Painters.*

"The composition of this picture resembles that of Titian's *Entombment,* but is less varied, less unified and in general less moving. The rhythm in line, in movement, and in color, is admirably done. The light is bright but excessive emphasis is avoided by the distribution of light over the background as well as the foreground. The oval which frames in the central masses is made of light, making an effective pattern."

—Barnes: *The Art in Painting.*

EMBARKATION OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA.—CLAUDE LORRAIN

THE MARRIAGE OF ISAAC AND REBECCA.—CLAUDE LORRAIN

Embarkation of the Queen of Sheba

THIS is the most famous painting by Claude. "The sunset glow with the haze of evening is here rendered as he alone could render it. The Queen of Sheba is hardly discernible; the real object of the picture is to paint and to hold light. And the luminous quality is nowhere more wonderfully realized than it is in this brilliant composition. . . .

"Constable, the great English artist, who could produce great pictures himself, as well as criticize them, exclaimed as he stood before these paintings: 'The Claudes! The Claudes are all, all I can think of here!' "

—Addison: *Art of the National Gallery.*

The Marriage of Isaac and Rebecca

THIS picture like the *Embarkation of the Queen of Sheba,* reveals Claude's love of the light that diffuses itself over the scene from the horizon. It shows also his fondness for the classical architecture with which he had become familiar in Italy. It will be recalled that this painter said he charged people only for the landscapes and threw the figures in.

Alexander Entering Babylon.—Le Brun

Alexander Entering Babylon

"IN *The Entrance of Alexander Into Babylon* the conqueror is standing in profile in his gold and ivory chariot, drawn by elephants. By his side his slaves bear a huge, elaborately carved vase, and before them, directing, is a mounted captain. Behind and around him his officers ride, the steps of temples and palaces are crowded with watchers and at the extreme left a family are crouched watching the conquering king."

—Potter: *Art of the Louvre.*

This and *Alexander Crossing the Granicus* were done as designs for tapestries for the Sun King, who posed for the figure of Alexander.

THE BLESSING.—CHARDIN

The Blessing

THIS is one of the masterpieces of genre painting. It was immediately popular and the artist made several copies of it. It is believed that the *Grace Before Meals,* in the Hermitage, is the original and the picture in the Louvre a replica. Another is preserved in Stockholm.

This artist confined himself to still-life and to scenes in the humble homes of the lower middle class.

Chardin and Watteau belong to the same century and to the same nation, and furthermore both were skilled interpreters of the life in France in that eighteenth century. At first thought there is nothing in common between the fêtes galantes of Watteau's canvases and the middle class family saying grace before their frugal meal. Yet a longer look at Chardin's painting reveals the same impulse to make life into something more than a mere living, and the simple room has its own charm. The exquisite simplicity of the background is in key with the charming naivete of mood revealed in the figures. Of all Chardin's paintings this is the most popular, and justly.

It is said that this artist's understanding of the effects of light, air, and tone-value was a hundred years ahead of his time.

EMBARKATION FOR THE ISLE OF CYTHEREA.—WATTEAU

Embarkation for the Isle of Cytherea

"HIS *Embarkation for the Isle of Cytherea,* though but a sketch for the finished picture now in Berlin, is a delightful creation, delicate in poetic fantasy, full of spontaneity and gracious charm, sure in drawing and harmonious in tone. The suffused, glowing light over the fairy-like idyll gives radiant beauty—the ideal beauty of an unreal world. . . . The little figures stand firmly on their feet and move with precision toward the barque of Love that is to bear them to Venus' isle. How sure is the drawing of the suitor who lifts his lady love to her feet and of the maiden, who, half-reluctant, draws backwards! The folds of drapery are true and in the seated figure, especially, fall over a little body very solidly constructed."

—Heywood: *Pictures of the Louvre.*

Looking at Watteau's paintings one begins to understand the statement of Talleyrand that he who had not lived in this period knew not what living really is. The court circle, and the salons did not so much live as reduce life to an art. What the painter usually achieves by his process of stressing picturesque elements and suppressing unattractive details, these men and women did with life itself. They passed their time in a perpetual pageant on a stage where the curtain was never rung down, but continually the actors played their ornamental roles.

Watteau has left for us on canvas the idealization of that period. If a sober perusal of history will not let us echo Talleyrand sentiment, such pictures as *The Embarquement for Cytherea* make us understand it. The exquisite figures in the landscape of unimaginable loveliness picture a realm of which one exclaims:

"For indeed these fields are lovely;
Lovelier not the Elysian lawns
Where paced the Demigods of old, and saw
The soft white vapor streak the crowned towers
Built to the sun."

PORTRAIT OF MADAME ADELAIDE.—NATTIER

Portrait of Madame Adelaide

MADAME ADELAIDE was the second daughter of Louis XV of France. This portrait, by Nattier, is one of his more successful creations. The French Princess is garbed in rich blue velvet, trimmed with sable.

Nattier portrayed his royal subjects as they wished to appear, regardless of however niggardly nature had treated them. In this instance, the painter was fortunate in his subject and the portrait possesses more character than is usually to be found in his likenesses.

Looking at this costume one can well understand the rule which required that a chair should be left vacant on each side of the queen, for otherwise the voluminous skirts of her ladies-in-waiting almost obscured her royal highness. The book, too, is significant of the time when the *salon* ruled the social and political life of France, and women ruled in the salons.

DIANA AND NYMPH AT THE BATH.—BOUCHER

Diana and Nymph at the Bath

"THIS is one of that painter's most important and beautiful works. At the foot of a high bank Diana, with her crescent over her brow, sits on a lot of drapery holding a string of pearls, one leg thrown lazily over the other, her head turned in profile to a companion who is seated below her, leaning over on her hands. The two are almost nude and there is a pastoral almost virginal charm about the picture rarely duplicated in his work. At Diana's left by her bow are a string of birds and a rabbit and at the pool at the left of the picture a couple of dogs are drinking. The fleshtones show Boucher at his best, with none of the coarsening, deep-rose color designing so much for tapestry so often produced.

"The figure of Diana is exquisite in its modelling, the firm, delicate lines wholly lacking that sensuality felt in most of his female figures. The whole thing is an idyl quite in keeping with the character of the goddess."

—Potter: *Art of the Louvre.*

PORTRAIT OF MADAME LE BRUN WITH HER DAUGHTER

Portrait of Madame LeBrun with Her Daughter

"IN the portrait of the artist with her daughter, the winsome beauty of the two young creatures and the affectionate relationship, gracefully expressed, appeal to the onlooker. The recollection that mother and daughter, so sympathetically in harmony when young, were afterwards sadly estranged, causes a painful emotion. Full of sweetness, the portrait is not insipid, owing to simplicity of arrangement and sincerity of workmanship. Madame LeBrun lacked vigor but she infused into her portraits feminine charm, the grace and freshness of her own individuality."

Heywood: *Pictures of the Louvre.*

In this picture of herself and her daughter, as well as in another when the beloved child appears older, the exquisite simplicity of costume contrasts sharply with such a dress as that of Madame Nattier, for example. The reaction from such over-elaboration was expensive simplicity. These were the days when Marie Antoinette played at dairying in her charming cottage at Versailles, and the aim of the fashionable was to look dainty rather than splendid.

The short crop of curls became the mode when the queen was obliged to cut her hair after an illness.

CORONATION OF JOSEPHINE.—DAVID

Coronation of Josephine

"THE moment chosen is that in which Napoleon, having crowned himself before the Pope, removes the crown from his own head to place it upon the head of Josephine. Near the seated Pope stands Cardinal Fesch; to the left are the brothers of the Emperor, and in the tribune seated is a portrait of Napoleon's mother, although she was not present at the ceremony. Talleyrand is at the right. General Armstrong, the American Ambassador, is at the back, the fourth from the candles. As a picture of pageantry, it is undoubtedly the finest in French art, and is called by Reinach the finest historical painting of any school. It is stately in composition, and the attention is carefully directed to the central figures by means of the semicircular grouping and the accents in color, which, though not brilliant, are harmonious."

—Heywood: *Pictures of the Louvre.*

Burial of Count D'Orgaz.—El Greco

Burial of Count D'Orgaz

THIS painting in the fashion of many religious pictures, portrays on one canvas scenes taking place at different times. Here is represented the burial of the count, with all the notables of Toledo in attendance, and his reception into heaven.

"Now look at the Gloria, which fills the upper portion of the canvas. There is the customary medieval representation, similar to the Byzantine artists, of the Virgin and Christ awaiting in the heavens the body of the dead saint. But how individual is the rendering; with what concentration and sobriety are the figures disposed. The Virgin, Christ, and the naked count, placed to form a triangle, are upheld by a single angel, full of vigor; round them is a swaying mass of holy persons, prophets, and angels; they drift on a great stratum of strange clouds, among which are cherubim and one nude child-angel, strangely placed at the right."

Calvert and Hartley: *El Greco.*

PRINCE CHARLES.—VELASQUEZ

Prince Charles

THIS portrait illustrates the fact that a great work of art is not necessarily a faultless one. Velazquez, almost unrivalled in his ability to catch on canvas the living quality of a human personality and unsurpassed at transferring to canvas what his eye beheld, whether of the animate or inanimate, could not draw from memory. The little prince is animated and life-like, but he is apparently faring forth on an artificial horse. As a galloping mount cannot be kept in one position long enough to be studied, Velasquez could not draw it correctly.

"Señor Beruete characterizes this picture of the young Charles Baltazar, cantering away on the fattest of ponies, as a triumph of grace and the angelic charm of infancy. The pony, it must be admitted, can hardly be included in this characterization, if judged by present-day standards of what children's ponies usually look like. But it must be remembered that at that time nothing less than a shire horse would have been fit to carry a man in full armour, and we need not suppose the painter to have been guilty of over much exaggeration if the ponies were proportionately heavy. Again, this is the only occasion on which Velasquez undertook the task of rendering an animal in motion, so for once he was debarred from drawing on canvas what he actually had standing before him."

—Davies: *Velasquez.*

This picture, like the *Maids of Honor,* and *The Children of Charles I,* and even Reynolds' *Strawberry Girl,* shows that the children of the great were dressed, not as children, but as diminutive men and women. Children's rights—even to unhampering clothing, are not a century old.

THE SURRENDER OF BREDA.—VELASQUEZ

The Surrender of Breda

"THE Marquis of Spinola receives with chivalrous courtesy the keys of the city, from his gallant antagonist, the Governor of Breda.

"Flags quartered with white and blue, their folds agitated by the wind, break in the happiest manner the straight lines of the lances held upright by the Spaniards. The horse of the Marquis, represented almost foreshortened from the rear and with its head turned, is a skilful invention to tone down military symmetry, so unfavorable to painting.

"It would not be easy to convey in words the chivalric pride and the Spanish grandeur which distinguish the heads of the officers forming the General's staff. They express the calm joy of triumph, tranquil pride of race, and familiarity with great events. These personages would have no need to bring proofs for their admittance into the orders of Santiago and Calatrava. Their bearing would admit them, so unmistakably are they hidalgos. Their long hair, their turned-up moustaches, their pointed beards, their steel gorgets, their corselets and their buff doublets render them in advance ancestral portraits to hang up, with their arms blazoned on the corner of the canvas, in the galleries of old castles. No one has known so well as Velasquez how to paint the gentleman with the superb familiarity, and, so to speak, as equal to equal."

—Gautier.

THE MAIDS OF HONOR.—VELASQUEZ

INFANTA MARGARITA MARIA.—VELASQUEZ

Infanta Margarita Maria

"THIS is like no other portrait. The round eyes are innocently childlike, but the expression is prematurely grave, the mouth firmly closed, and the little princess stands in her stiff, unlovely dress with demure dignity, as befits the daughter of a king. No artist, perhaps, was more unfortunate than Velasquez in the epoch which he was called upon to represent. But even into expressionless faces, into ungainly hooped skirts and stiff adornments, he put charm by sheer force of genius. Only an artist can fully appreciate the marvellous qualities of this apparently simple little picture, sober in effect yet remarkable in sincerity. The tone values in the satin gown and in the silky hair are absolutely true, and, to the close observer, full of wonderful light, of exquisite color in the shadows.

"Smooth down the silky hair near the parting—the high light seems to change. Lift the gold chain and see the light ripple back. Clasp the solid little chin or pull out the pink bows. There is actuality here and there is besides exquisite tone, quality and brushwork. Yet the work is done with ease, with the accurate, single brush stroke of a master hand."

—Heywood: *Pictures of the Louvre.*

The Maids of Honor

WE see Velasquez at work in his studio in the palace, painting the portraits of the king and queen, whose figures are reflected in a mirror at the end of the room. During an interval for rest the little princess, Doña Margarita, has come in with her dog, and her two maids of honor who have given their names to the picture. The canvas is a marvelous example of Velasquez' skill in composition and lighting.

THE VISION OF ST. ANTHONY.—MURILLO

The Vision of St. Anthony

THE VISION OF SAINT ANTHONY was a subject which Murillo painted many times and in many fashions. Here instead of being revealed in glory, the Christ-child is seen caressing the Saint with a most humanly child-like gesture. Five cherubs in glory fill the background to the left, with two more in the foreground, one holding the lily of the Annunciation, and the other opening the book of prophecy.

This painting was made for a Spanish convent, but was carried off during the Napoleonic wars by Marshal Soult. It is now in the Kaiser Frederich Museum of Berlin.

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.—MURILLO

The Immaculate Conception

"THE story of the Immaculate Conception is intimately interwoven with the name of Murillo. Worship of the Virgin Mother was a treasured dogma of the Spanish Church. At the earnest instigation of Philip IV, a papal bull was issued in 1617, declaring the immaculate nature of Mary. 'Seville flew into a frenzy of joy.' Magnificent celebrations were organized in the cathedral. It became the desire of all the religious painters of the century to celebrate the triumph. To this task Murillo bent all the passion and power of his brush. More than twenty times he translated the story of the Conception into the language of Spain. His visions appealed to the inner heart of his countrymen. They are still reverenced throughout the peninsula."

—Hartley: *Spanish Painting.*

THE FRUIT GIRLS.—MURILLO

The Fruit Girls

MURILLO discovered how to make pictures salable. Loving his native Seville dearly, he appealed to a similar love in his fellow-citizens and for them he painted the flower and fruit vendors of Seville, not as they were, but as the sort of children people instinctively caress. "One has but to glance at his impossibly sinless and confiding little ragamuffins to recognize that while he gazed at them his senses were concerned less with life than with the making of pictures, which above all other considerations, must be salable . . . In his determination to please the artist transformed these dirty, unkempt, ill-developed, and disreputable mendicants into incarnations of innocence. . . . As human documents they have small resemblance to truth, but they are always pleasing."

MARRIAGE À LA MODE—SCENE I.—HOGARTH

Marriage à la Mode—Scene I

"THE first scene of this series represents the preparations for marriage between the daughter of a rich citizen and the son and heir of a proud old peer. The bride's father, a prudent, sordid man, cares little for the bridegroom's ancient pedigree, which is satirically exhibited as issuing out of the mailed loins of the Bastard of Normandy; but he respects the ample securities which the aged nobleman lays before him. The young lord, a fop in his dress and something of a fool in his looks, gazes at his person in the mirror, and practises with his snuff-box infinitely more to his own satisfaction than to that of his intended—who turns half from him in scorn, plays with her wedding-ring and listens, as much as offended pride will allow, to the words of Mr. Silver-tongue, a smooth and insinuating lawyer. Beside them there are two spaniels, coupled contrary to their inclinations, and pulling different ways—symbolical of the happiness to be expected from the approaching union."

—Cunningham: *Lives of British Painters.*

SELF PORTRAIT.—HOGARTH

THE SHRIMP GIRL.—HOGARTH

The Shrimp Girl

"THE sketch of *The Shrimp Girl* is a marvel of spontaneous life. The radiance of the morning seems to break in her smile. The parts dashed in, and the underpainting untouched, are equally alive. It might have been done by a twentieth century painter."

—Abbott: *Great Painters.*

"If only it had been possible to send *The Shrimp Girl* to Paris! That brilliant impressionist sketch, done long before the era of impressionism, would have astonished the French critics who are not already acquainted with it. Indeed, *The Shrimp Girl* is something of a miracle. She cries out from Hogarth's works, a *tour de force,* done without premeditation, in some happy hour when the unerring hand unerringly followed the quick eye. It is an inspiration."

—Lewis Hind: *Hogarth.*

"This fishwife, known to us as *The Shrimp Girl,* must have been a *rara avis,* apparently far superior to her own condition. It is said that the fish-wives of New Haven are a fine race of women and they are known to be distinctive and apart from all others as a class. *The Shrimp Girl* is a splendid specimen of her class and we would walk a mile any day to look upon so beautiful and wholesome a face."

—Trusler and Robinson: *Hogarth.*

Self Portrait

THE painter trained to skilful drawing by his study of engraving, the keen observer of nature rather than reader of books on art, has here brought his eye and his hand to the task of portraying himself and has achieved something which seems to modern taste more a work of art than his stories in paint. The shrewd, keen-eyed, satiric, but vastly good-natured man, with his dog who seems to understand him so well but not quite to share his sense of humor, is exactly the sort of person we expect the illustrator of *Hudibras,* the painter of *Marriage a la Mode,* to be.

Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse.—Reynolds

Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse

"IF Michelangelo had never painted his prophets and sibyls in the Vatican Chapel, Reynolds would never have left us *The Tragic Muse* we know. Not that it takes much from any of them, but it is rather the formal conception—the throne, the large disposition of the limbs, the figures in the background—than upon those details of pose that one's conviction is based that Reynolds had the Sistine pictures in his mind when he erected his mental image. . . .

"Its whole aspiration, aside from the bowl and dagger in the background, is towards that abstract method of vision upon which Reynolds discoursed so much and practiced so little."

—Armstrong: *Sir Joshua Reynolds.*

The dim figures in the background—those with the poison-bowl and the dagger—typify the tragedy in which the great Sarah was so impressive. William Archer tells this amusing incident illustrative of her power to "purge the soul with terror," as Aristotle says.

Mrs. Siddons was playing Rowe's *Tamerlane,* and in the last act when the tyrant strangled her lover before her eyes, she worked herself up to such a pitch of agony, and gave such a terrible reality to the few convulsive words she tried to utter, that the audience demanded that the curtain be lowered. Then they insisted on the manager's appearing to reassure them that Mrs. Siddons was still alive, and they refused to have the play resumed. Still more astonishing was the effect of this scene on two seasoned actors, Holman and Macredy, when they sat in the audience. Happening to glance at his friend, Holman asked: "Do I look as pale as you do, Macredy?"

Another anecdote reveals Sir Joshua's skill in compliments, as well as with the paint brush.

"When he (Sir Joshua) painted the portrait of Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse, he wrote his name on the border of her robe. The great actress, conceiving it to be a piece of classic embroidery, went to examine it, and seeing the words, smiled. The artist bowed and said: 'I could not lose the opportunity of sending my name down to posterity on the hem of your garment.'"

—Cunningham: *British Painters*

PORTRAIT OF ADMIRAL KEPPEL.—REYNOLDS

THE STRAWBERRY GIRL.—REYNOLDS

The Strawberry Girl

"SIR JOSHUA used to say that no artist, however great, had done more than two or three original things and that among his own works, only his *Strawberry Girl* deserved to be so considered."

—Armstrong: *Sir Joshua Reynolds.*

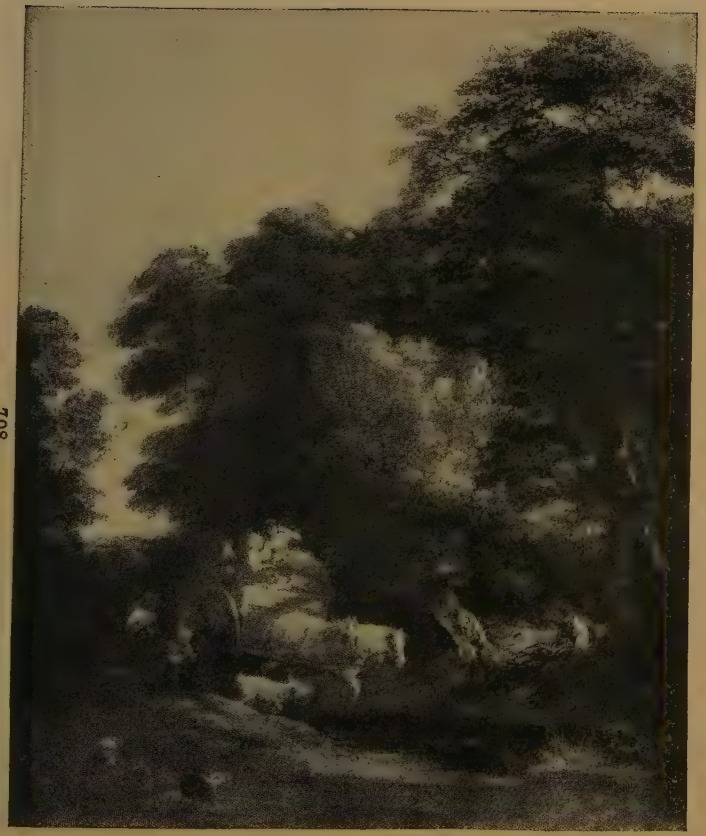
The young person who posed for this picture was Sir Joshua's niece and particular pet, Theophilia Palmer, known to her affectionate uncle as "Offy." The girl was fourteen at this time and her criticism of the picture was that Sir Joshua had made her look far too young for that age.

Most critics find it hard to account for the painter's estimate of this work. Sir Walter Armstrong insists that Reynolds had not the least real understanding of children. He admired them and found them interesting, "as he found kittens interesting and graceful to paint," but his interpretation of children never expresses the child's soul, but only a grown person's impression of a child.

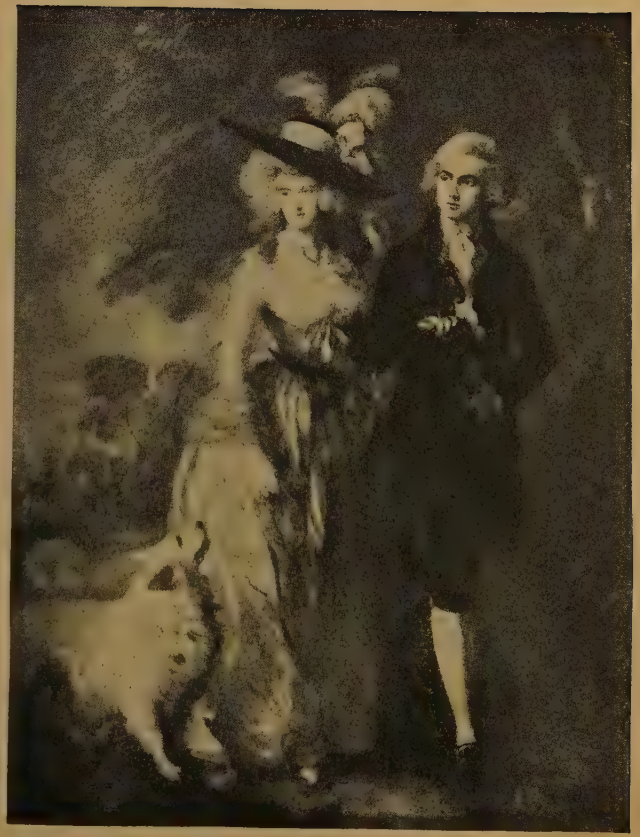
Portrait of Admiral Keppel

"SIR JOSHUA always set out with the determination of making the most of his subject. He claimed that it was no excuse for an artist to plead that his subject was a bad one. He observed that there was always nature, and this was sufficient when other attractions failed. When he had to deal with such themes as the *Portrait of Dr. Johnson,* this motto stood him in good stead. . . . The portrait of Admiral Keppel also owes its charm to its sincerity, for the bluff old sea-dog was no more romantic-looking than the others. Reynolds had sailed with Admiral Keppel himself, when he visited Venice in 1749."

—Addison: *Art of the National Gallery.*



THE MARKET CART.—GAINSBOROUGH



A MORNING WALK.—GAINSBOROUGH

A Morning Walk

THIS painting is regarded by many as the finest achievement of the artist. It was done in Gainsborough's happiest manner. It represents Squire Hallett and his wife taking a walk with a fine white Pomeranian dog accompanying them.

The pride of the Squire and trustfulness of his wife and the confident air, born of established position and substance—all this emanates from the canvas.

The Market Cart

THIS picture was painted during the period when Gainsborough was working at Bath, the fashionable health resort of England, where he had a large clientele, for whom he chiefly painted portraits. This landscape bears evidence of having been painted in the studio, and not out of doors. One critic calls attention to the fact that the blue of the water could not possibly be reflected from anything in the picture, nor refracted from any light the artist has painted. The trees "belong to no species known to the botanist," and yet as a landscape painter Gainsborough was a great artist.

THE DUCHESS OF GORDON.—ROMNEY

THE BLUE BOY.—GAINSBOROUGH

The Blue Boy

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS once stated in his *Discourses* that the prevailing colors of a picture should be warm, and he went farther and mentioned blue as unsuitable for the dominating note of a painting, since it is too cold. There was always some rivalry between Reynolds and Gainsborough after the latter's rapid rise to fame and it is said that to disprove this theory, Gainsborough painted his celebrated *Blue Boy*.

"It is a portrait of a certain Jonathan Buttall, son of a wealthy ironmonger. He is represented at full-length, standing in a landscape, in a rich blue 'Van Dyck' costume, holding a large hat with a white feather in his right hand."

The painting is now in the Huntington Gallery.

The Duchess of Gordon

ROMNEY painted several pictures of this charming lady, sometimes alone and sometimes with other members of her family. It was said of him that he had the faculty of making his subjects look as they wished to appear, and yet look natural. The Duchess of Gordon is wearing the simple white muslin which the age of Louis XV had made popular in high places—a kind of elegant and expensive simplicity, which was a reaction from the over-elaborate costumes and the astonishing head-dresses which had been the vogue.

LANDSCAPE WITH BATHERS.—WILSON

Landscape with Bathers

THIS composition, like many of Wilson's, shows the influence of Claude Lorraine. The lighting, the trees and the figures all suggest that composite of Italian landscape and dreams of the glories of the ancient cities which made the ideal world of both painters.

"Wilson's landscapes are in general products of fancy rather than of existing realities; scenes pictured from the imagination rather than transcribed from nature. Yet there is enough of nature in them to please the commonest clown; enough that is poetic to charm the most fastidious fancy. His thoughts were ever dwelling among the hills and streams renowned in story and song, and he loved to expatiate on ruined temples and to walk over fields where great deeds had been achieved and where gods had appeared among men."

—Cunningham.

THE CORN FIELD.—CONSTABLE

The Corn Field

"*THE Corn Field,* painted when he was fifty—a typical Constable. Constable was pleased with *The Corn Field.* Writing of it to Fisher he said: 'It is not neglected in any part; the trees are more than usually studied, well defined as well as the stems; they are shaken by a pleasant and healthful breeze at noon

'While now a fresher gale
Sweeping with shadowy gusts the fields of corn . . . '

This picture, perhaps the best known and most popular of his works, was presented to the National Gallery in 1837 by an association of gentlemen who purchased it of the painter's executors."

The Hay-Wain.—Constable

The Hay-Wain

THIS is a work of Constable's mature period, showing mastery of handling of masses, as well as of the aspect of English landscape.

"From this country cottage ensconsed between rustling bushes and tree-tops that wave over it, from the cool clear water moving quietly and giving back the blue sky, where the cart is crossing, streams peacefully a luminous softness, gliding across the reeds on the bank and clothing with delicacy the wide fields on the far side; the great sky over all enveloping all in its movement and structure, marking the season, the climate and the moment."

—Andre Fontainas: *Constable.*

"This picture, originally called *A Landscape, Noon,* when exhibited in Paris in 1834 caused quite a sensation among the French landscape painters who were struck by its wonderful freshness, and the truth to nature. 'The next exhibit,' says a friend writing to him, after a visit to the city, 'will teem with your imitators'; and in truth the French have always shown themselves far more appreciative of Constable's art than his own countrymen. *The Hay-Wain* obtained for him a gold medal from Louis Philippe."

—Cunningham.

THE SUN RISING THROUGH VAPOR.—TURNER

The Sun Rising Through Vapor

"IT is curious that in this picture, a work that the painter thought worthy to be bequeathed to the nation, the sailors or fishermen should be taken almost exactly from a picture by Teniers, and the men-of-war are the snub-nosed, high-pooped ships of Vandervelde's time with a sprit topmast at the bowsprit end, and lateen mizzens. One would almost fancy that Turner imitated the two Dutch painters just as later on he went out of his way to break a lance with Claude Lorraine."

—Wyllie: *Life of Turner.*

"Although Turner was only thirty years old when this picture was painted, it is quite natural in treatment throughout, and the proof of this is that he selected it as one of his two representatives in the contest with Claude. . . .

"Much of the foreground is occupied by a fishing-boat ashore, and a group of fish-women on the sands who are cleaning and selling fish. The whole scene is of a kind which must have been very familiar to Turner, for he liked to be with fishermen and sailors, and was an early riser who had often seen the sun in the east through mists of an English sea."

THE FIGHTING TÉMÉRAIRE.—TURNER

The Fighting Téméraire

"CERTAINLY Turner's object in this arbitrary lighting was to give the *Temeraire* a sort of ghostly, unearthly look, as if already more a melancholy vision of the past than any present reality. Turner, with his love of the sea and his strong national feeling, took a deeply patriotic interest in the war-vessels of the old, heroic times, the glorious days of Nelson. The picture, both in sentiment and execution, is one of the finest of the later works. The sun sets in red, and the red is made by the artist's craft at the same time a decided hue and luminous—always a great technical difficulty; golden sunsets are easy in comparison, as every painter knows."

—Hamerton: *Turner.*

"A party of the Academy Club were going to Greenwich when their steamer passed an old battle-ship in tow. 'There is a fine subject for you, Turner,' said Stanfield, and the result was *The Fighting Téméraire Towed to Her Last Berth to be Broken Up,* 1838.

'The flag that braved the battle and the breeze
No longer owns her.'

"The three-decker is not the sturdy structure of heart-of-oak and hemp which pushed its way through the thick of the enemy's line at Trafalgar. It is a diaphanous spectre of mist and moon-beams, rigged with cobwebs, whilst the tug is the most misshapen craft ever painted. . . Though as regards painting, the picture was by no means up to Turner's best work, its sentiment caused a great stir."

—Wyllie: *Life of Turner.*

Ulysses Deriding Polyphemus.—Turner

Ulysses Deriding Polyphemus

"ALMOST wonderful kaleidoscopic composition lighted from all directions: A fiery sunrise on one side of the picture, and on the other the galley of Ulysses in full sunlight, her long lateen yards crowded with sailors who are loosing the bellying sails, and hoisting strange pennants. The oars are lashing the water, and round the prow in a sort of green phosphorescence are many sea-nymphs gamboling like dolphins; beyond are arched rocks and fairy caves with lights twinkling in misty grottos; above and behind, mountain peaks which melt into the clouds, and the dim outline of the Cyclops is seen in the mists, resting his head on his hand and calling down vengeance upon the Greeks, who have blinded him."

—Wyllie: *Life of Turner.*

NEAR HINGHAM, NORFOLK.—CROME

Near Hingham, Norfolk

"NEAR HINGHAM, painted in 1813, for its charm of simple things, its sense of the seclusion of the quiet, natural country in its daily life, stands almost next to the *Cottage with White Palings* of Rembrandt.

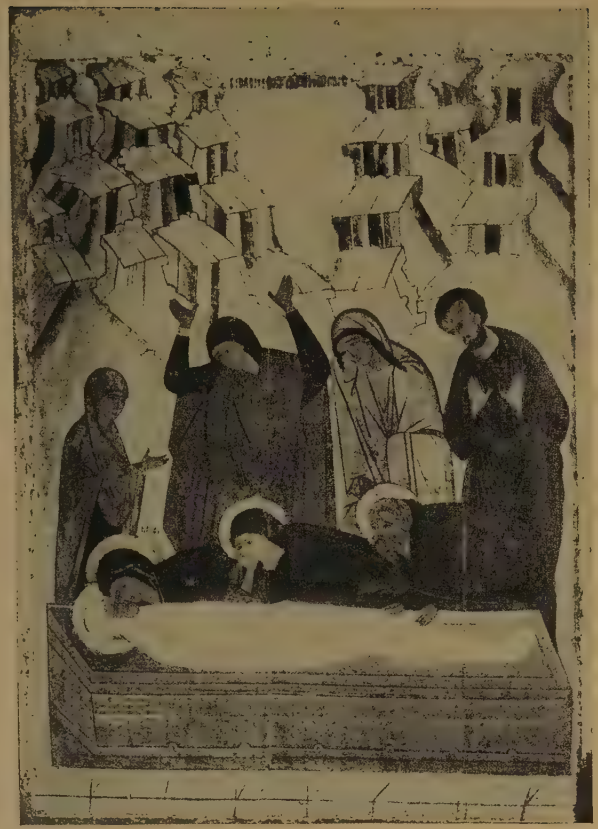
"Of the technicalities of art Crome was not sufficiently master for him to rival the exquisite distances and atmosphere in the great Dutchman's work. But even the best of Rembrandt's etchings have no tree-drawings potent and sensitive as those of Crome."

—Wedmore: *Studies in English Art.*

"It is not merely that the features of the country are distinctive, but that he is thoroughly individual and native and thus sees more of beauty than a stranger would in the low, flat fields, the long unbroken reaches of the streams, the monotonous rows of poplars and pollard willows and the wasteful lanes with rich tangled hedges that modern cultivation has for most part pruned away.

"The artist ever infuses into his own work something of what lies in his own mind, and tells us not so much how nature looked, as how he felt she looked. Crome, though his mind was not a large one, threw it heartily into all he did."

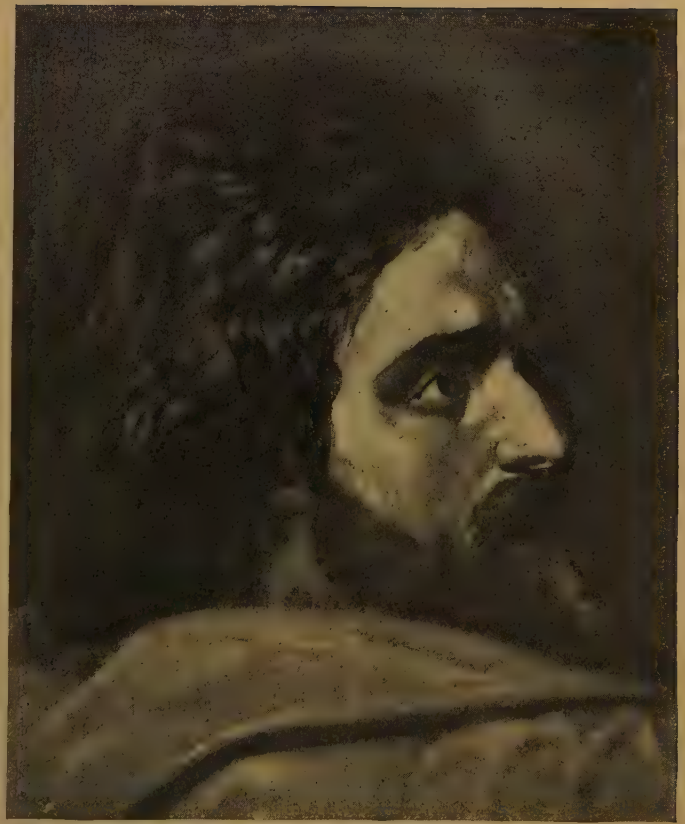
THE HOLY TRINITY.—AUDREY RUBLER
(See Page 591)



THE ENTOMBMENT.—ANONYMOUS
(See Page 591)

THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS.—ANONYMOUS
(See Page 591)

What Is Truth?—Nicholas Gé
(See Page 598)



Head of John the Baptist.—Alexander Ivano
(Detail from Christ Appearing to the People)
(See Page 597)

LADY MOROZOV ON THE WAY TO PRISON.—SURIKOV
(See Page 595)

IVAN THE TERRIBLE AND HIS SON.—REPIN
(See Page 595)

Cossacks Writing to Sultan of Turkey.—Ilya Repin
(See Page 595)

THE LAMENT.—MICHAEL VRUBEL

The Lament

"AMONG all the artists of the second half of the nineteenth century who approached religious themes, only Vrubel did so with the same burning passion and the same delicate penetration into the mysteries of beauty which distinguished the art of Ivanov. . . . Among our artists he is the only true poet who hovers high above the common level. A bitter life, almost ceaseless failure, the unresponsiveness of society—all sapped Vrubel's gift, and lent a strange 'grimace' to his works, but through it shines the true artistic flame and so great is his technical knowledge, so colossal his skill, that one not only pardons his grotesqueness, but begins to love it."

—Benais: *The Russian School of Painting.*

TAKING THE VOW.—NESTEROV

Taking the Vow

"NESTEROV should have been one of the most pleasant of Russian painters. Had he remained faithful to his talent, to his peculiar vocation, he could have been an excellent landscape painter. This is proved by the background of most of his canvases. Unfortunately, besides his wonderful landscapes, there is little to hold the eye, and the landscape plays but a secondary part. Only in his *Vision of St. Bartholomew* do the figures not spoil the admirable landscape which unrolls behind them. The rest of Nesterov's pictures, with fascinatingly conceived landscapes replete with quiet melancholy, are full of commonplace and badly executed figures, which try hard to seem sacred and touching."

Benais: *The Russian School of Art.*

MUSCOVITES, XVII CENTURY, EAGERLY WATCHING THE ARRIVAL OF FOREIGNERS.—RYABUSHKIN

Muscovites of the XVII Century Eagerly Watching the Arrival of Foreigners

"HE was taken up with the every-day life of the past rather than with its grandiose tragedies. It was as if he saw all these scenes of the past in reality, as if he strolled in person among all these remote nooks and entered the attics of the old palaces, and all the quaintness and picturesque details remained fixed in his memory. There is not a trace of a desire to embellish his subjects. Plainly, like an eye-witness he renders all the simple snobbishness of the times of yore. He did not strive to produce poetical impressions, yet a great poetical charm lives in his works. It is the fascination of ancient diaries, of antique objects, and of all that brings in its train the very fragrance of the by-gone days."

—Benais.

A study of these Muscovites watching the arrival of foreigners will illustrate how much at home the artist was in that past he loved to paint. The spectator forgets the strange costumes in his interest in what claims the attention of these Russians of three centuries ago.

RUSSIAN VILLAGERS.—BORIS GRIGORYEV

Russian Villagers

"THERE is a phantasmal quality to the painting that suggests some strange apoplectic vision, a tortured memory, an hallucination. As a product of Bolshevist Russia, the canvas has no parallel in art."

—Brinton: *Russian Schools of Painting.*

SAINTLY GUESTS.—ROERICH

Saintly Guests

"ROERICH is a Petrograd painter, but by the intentional coarseness of his technic, by the character of his coloring, which reminds one of Russian gingerbread and round loaves, he incontestibly belongs to the Moscow group. Roerich is a very gifted man, but of an undeveloped taste; half-barbarian like his prototype, Vasnetzov. He too readily recurs to cheap effects, but he sometimes reaches a considerable height, and some of his work breathes a truly epical spirit.

"The reproduction of *Saintly Guests* shows none of the 'gingerbread' colors, but the 'intentional coarseness of technic' can be perceived, and likewise some of that 'truly epical spirit,' which finds expression in the mysticism of Russia."

NAPOLEON IN MOSCOW.—VERESCHCHAGIN
(See Page 598)